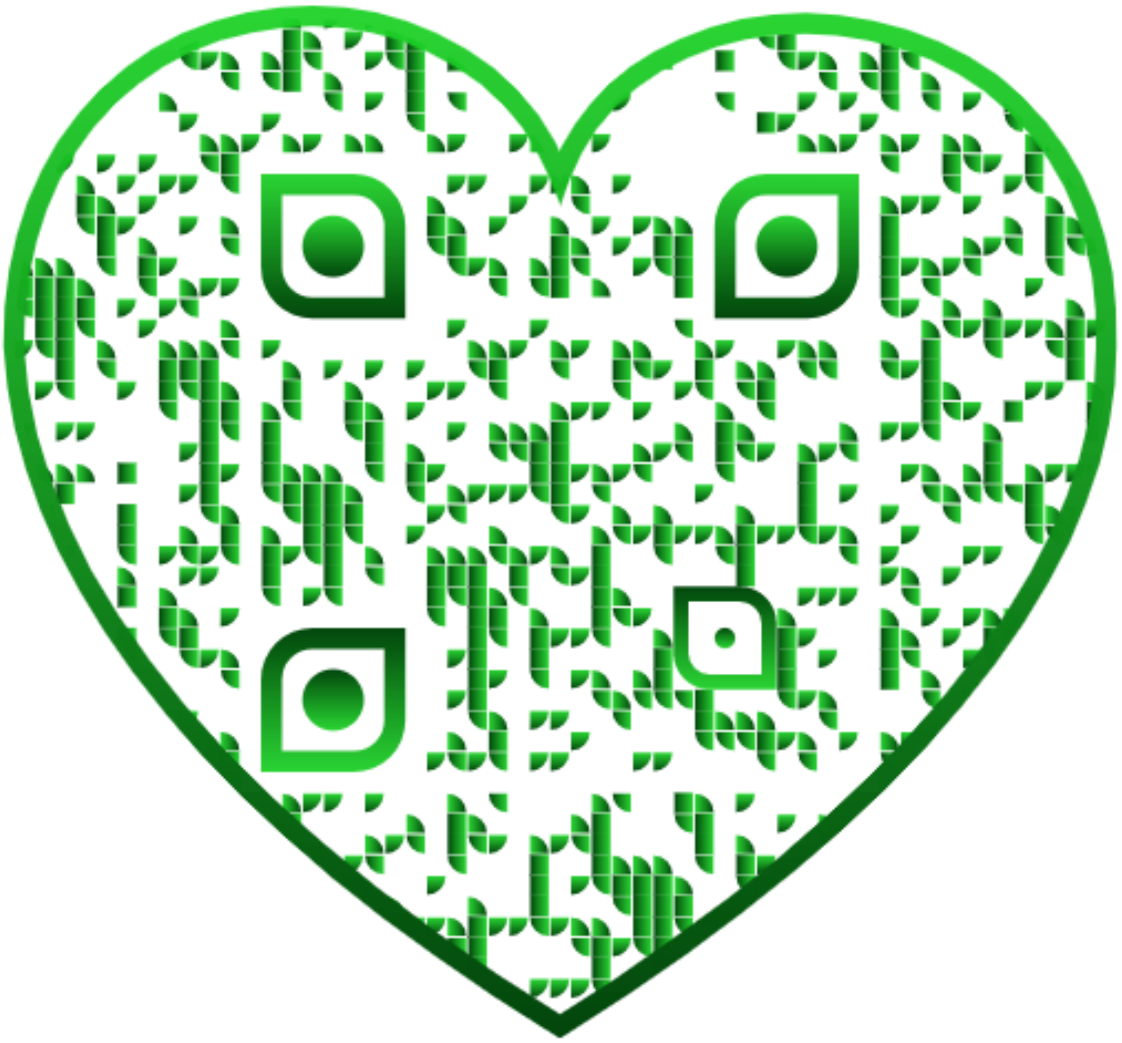
Guitar MAGAZINE

JAN 2020
ISSUE 376
£5.99

Gear of the Decade

2010-2019

TC ELECTRONIC • STRYMON • YAMAHA
TAYLOR • KEMPER • FENDER • FANO
UNIVERSAL AUDIO • BLACKSTAR



Lowden
GUITARS
Celebrating 45 years
of the Lowden Guitar
lowdenguitars.com/45th
45
45

45TH

ANNIVERSARY

LIMITED EDITION

Loaded

GUITARS

CONTENTS

100

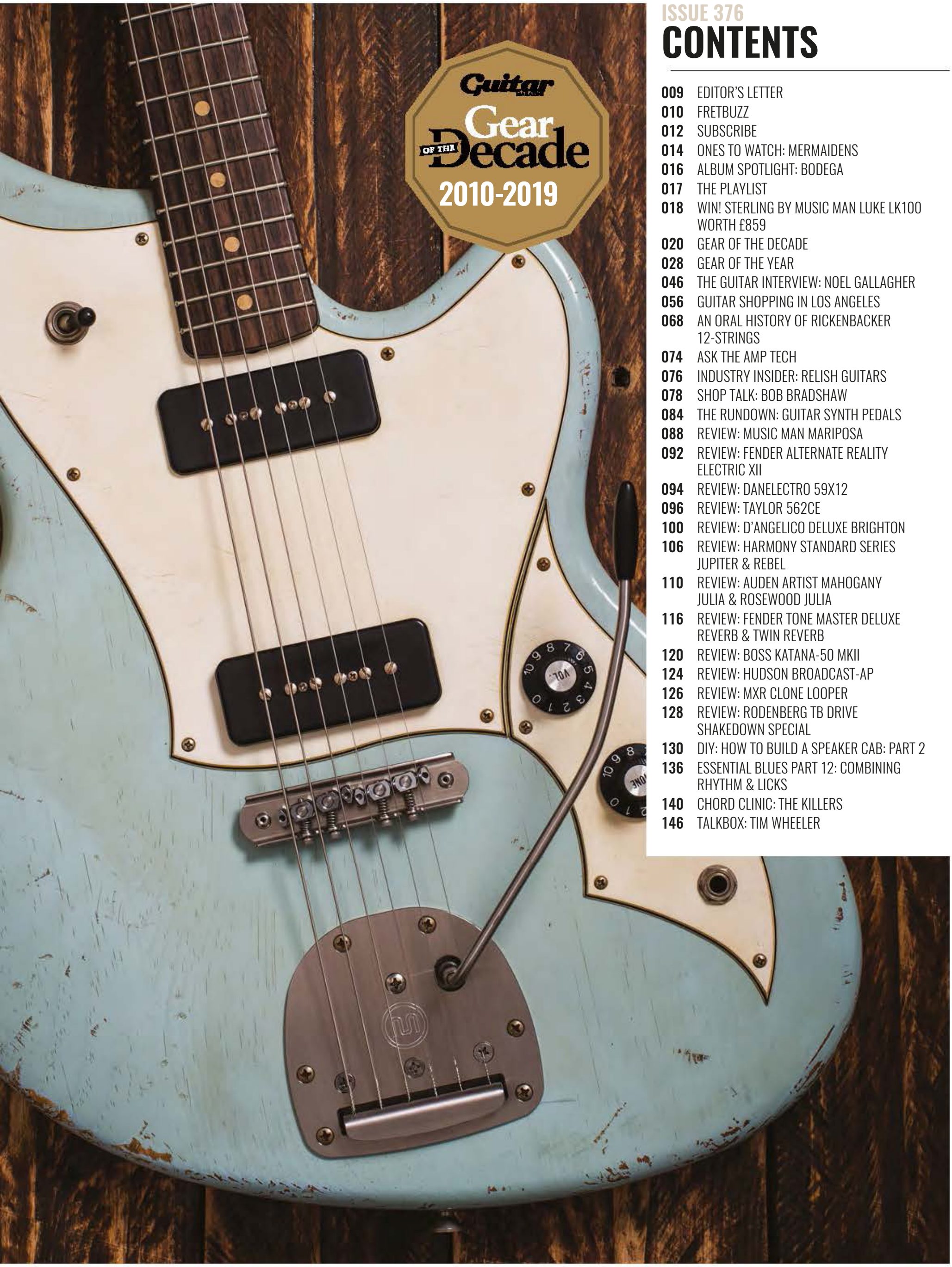
46

110

56

116

124



ISSUE 376

CONTENTS

009 EDITOR'S LETTER
010 FRETBUZZ
012 SUBSCRIBE
014 ONES TO WATCH: MERMAIDENS
016 ALBUM SPOTLIGHT: BODEGA
017 THE PLAYLIST
018 WIN! STERLING BY MUSIC MAN LUKE LK100 WORTH £859
020 GEAR OF THE DECADE
028 GEAR OF THE YEAR
046 THE GUITAR INTERVIEW: NOEL GALLAGHER
056 GUITAR SHOPPING IN LOS ANGELES
068 AN ORAL HISTORY OF RICKENBACKER 12-STRINGS
074 ASK THE AMP TECH
076 INDUSTRY INSIDER: RELISH GUITARS
078 SHOP TALK: BOB BRADSHAW
084 THE RUNDOWN: GUITAR SYNTH PEDALS
088 REVIEW: MUSIC MAN MARIPOSA
092 REVIEW: FENDER ALTERNATE REALITY ELECTRIC XII
094 REVIEW: DANELECTRO 59X12
096 REVIEW: TAYLOR 562CE
100 REVIEW: D'ANGELICO DELUXE BRIGHTON
106 REVIEW: HARMONY STANDARD SERIES JUPITER & REBEL
110 REVIEW: AUDEN ARTIST MAHOGANY JULIA & ROSEWOOD JULIA
116 REVIEW: FENDER TONE MASTER DELUXE REVERB & TWIN REVERB
120 REVIEW: BOSS KATANA-50 MKII
124 REVIEW: HUDSON BROADCAST-AP
126 REVIEW: MXR CLONE LOOPER
128 REVIEW: RODENBERG TB DRIVE SHAKEDOWN SPECIAL
130 DIY: HOW TO BUILD A SPEAKER CAB: PART 2
136 ESSENTIAL BLUES PART 12: COMBINING RHYTHM & LICKS
140 CHORD CLINIC: THE KILLERS
146 TALKBOX: TIM WHEELER

INTRODUCING THE

GIBSON G-45

THE NEW GENERATION OF ACOUSTIC GUITARS.
Gibson
WWW.GIBSON.COM

EASTMAN

ROMEO

FOLLOW YOUR HEART.

eastmanguitars.com

Guitar MAGAZINE

BandLab UK Limited
Unit 7, Riverside Court,
Lower Bristol Road,
Bath BA2 3DZ

EDITORIAL

CHIEF EDITOR Chris Vinnicombe
MANAGING EDITOR Josh Gardner
ART EDITOR Philip Millard
PRODUCTION EDITOR Michael Leonard
ASSOCIATE EDITOR Sam Roberts
SENIOR PRODUCT SPECIALIST Huw Price
INSTRUMENT & COVER PHOTOGRAPHY Eleanor Jane
CONTRIBUTORS Michael James Adams, Tony Bacon, Darran Charles, Chris Fantana, Rod Fogg, Leigh Fuge, Dave Hunter, Jo Johnson, Ed Oleszko, Richard Purvis, Jeff Slate, Michael Watts
HAVE A STORY? Email us at editors@guitar.com

SALES

ADVERTISING MANAGER Joe Supple
joe.supple@guitar.com
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER Di Marsh
di.marsh@guitar.com

PRODUCTION & OPERATIONS

PUBLISHING PRODUCTION MANAGER Craig Broadbridge
PRINT William Gibbons & Sons Ltd
DISTRIBUTED BY Marketforce (UK) Ltd
5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London E14 5HU

BANDLAB TECHNOLOGIES

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER Meng Ru Kuok
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER Ivan Chen
UK COUNTRY DIRECTOR & HEAD OF STRATEGY & PARTNERSHIPS (EMEA) Holly Bishop
AVP, WEB TECHNOLOGIES Laurent Le Graverend
AVP, COMMS & PARTNERSHIPS Lauren Hendry Parsons
SENIOR MANAGER, GROUP & BRAND STRATEGY Krystle Hall
MANAGER, CONTENT STRATEGY Iliyas Ong
ASSOCIATE MANAGER, CONTENT STRATEGY Terence Stanley
STAFF WRITER Cillian Breathnach

SUBSCRIPTIONS & BACK ISSUES

guitar.com/subscribe
Tel +44 (0) 1371 851 882
Calls cost 7p per minute plus your phone company's access charge

BANDLAB TECHNOLOGIES

All content copyright BandLab UK Limited 2019, all rights reserved. While we make every effort to ensure that the factual content of *Guitar Magazine* is correct, we cannot take any responsibility nor be held accountable for any factual errors printed. Please make every effort to check quoted prices and product specifications with manufacturers prior to purchase. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or resold without the prior consent of BandLab UK Limited. *Guitar Magazine* recognises all copyrights contained within this issue. Where possible, we acknowledge the copyright.

EDITOR'S LETTER

AWARDS SEASON

As the melancholy strains of *Auld Lang Syne* herald the end of another trip around the sun, we're not just another year older – we've also reached the end of a decade. Music listening and music making have been transformed and reshaped by technology in recent years, and it's something I reflect on in greater depth in our Gear Of The Decade cover feature, which begins on p20 and charts a 10 year period during which digital technology for guitarists has come of age and delivered on many of its original promises. Modelling tech isn't a compromise or a guilty pleasure any more – it features in the backline and on the pedalboards of some of the world's biggest artists and provides almost limitless scope for experimentation for even the most casual guitarist.

This month we also reveal the best products of 2019, as nominated by our expert panel and voted for by the *Guitar.com* audience – if you are planning to fork out hard cash on a guitar, amp, stompbox or accessory in the coming weeks, be sure to head to p28 first to find out which pieces of kit set our pulses racing during the past 12 months.

Thinking back to 2010, I'm 90 per cent certain that not a single guitar, amp or pedal I owned then survives in my current rig today – and I can't be the only one. Guitar trading is an entertaining sport in itself, and the hope is that one's taste becomes more discerning over time. Yet as I type this, I'm in the process of wrapping up a deal to sell a guitar that I'm sure will come back to haunt me.

Please write in to editors@guitar.com to share your tales of guitar wheeler-dealing and horse trading, and if you have 'before' and 'after' rig shots from 2010 and 2019 respectively then I'd love to see those, too!

In the meantime, happy new year – I'll see you in 2020…

Chris Vinnicombe
Chief Editor, Guitar.com & Guitar Magazine
chris@guitar.com

DON'T MISS OUT!

Visit us online for the latest on gear, artists, technique and the guitar industry
Guitar.com | facebook.com/guitar | youtube.com/theguitarmagazine
instagram.com/guitar | twitter.com/guitar

FRETBUZZ

Your letters and observations on the world of guitar

Join the conversation Email us at editors@guitar.com

THE MILLIMETRIC SYSTEM

Hi guys, just finished up reading the Future Sounds issue [GM375] and I had to write to you about the some of the wonderfully unconventional guitars you reviewed in the issue – particularly the Millimetric MGS2. I'll admit that when it comes to guitars I've always had a soft spot for unconventionally-shaped instruments (I was delighted to see that Fender Japan has recently reissued the positively bonkers Swinger!), but even by those standards, the Millimetric is a bit out there… the first time I saw it, I actually laughed at how out-there it is as a design.

But the more I looked at the pictures of it [see above], the more I started to really love it! Guitar design is so often a slave to those classic shapes of the 50s and 60s, and while seeing something this unapologetically modern and new might seem weird at first, but I honestly think I'd play one now – the vibe, the attention to detail, the uniqueness of it… Hats off to Millimetric, Relish and all the other makers out there who are trying to push the guitar forward, it's long overdue!

RON JOHNSON, VIA EMAIL

The best thing about the MGS2 was that it played and sounded just as good as it looked, Ron. And that's the important thing – the classics are classics not just because they look great, but because they were fantastic player's instruments. If modern makers want their designs to endure even half as long as the Strat and Les Paul have, they need to make sure they tick all the playing boxes, too. Which is precisely what's so exciting about some of the new boutique makers.

NEW NOISE

Dear *Guitar Magazine*, I just wanted to thank you for the fantastic New Breed feature in the Future Sounds issue. I'll be honest, I pretty much stopped listening to new music in about 2005, and have long been of the opinion that most of the new guitar music I've heard has been derivative, boring, or just not for me. But reading through the New Breed list, I decided that I'd put my preconceptions and prejudices aside and actually listen to some of the bands and acts that caught my eye… and what do you know, you were right – the guitar's not dead after all!

I now have a Spotify playlist with the likes of Beabadoobee, Julien Baker, Boy Azooga, Snail Mail and more, and I feel like I did as a teenager in the 90s, discovering exciting bands all the time – thanks!

STUART JAMESON, VIA EMAIL

FROM SOCIAL MEDIA

I'm a guitar lover, but the use of rare woods in guitar manufacturing is not sustainable. Guitar makers need to innovate, to develop new materials that produce great sound. Move on…

TOM FERGUSON, VIA FACEBOOK

Fender claims that the average guitarist spends $10,000 on gear in their lifetime… This is the only time I've been above average at anything!

SERGIO GIUSEPPE RIPA, VIA FACEBOOK

$10,000 on gear in their lifetime? Um… I overshot that a couple of decades ago…

JAMES BERGER, VIA FACEBOOK

Totally agree with Ian Fowles' column on playing guitar while you watch TV [head to *Guitar.com* to check out the first instalment – Ed]. It sharpens your ear if you try to play snatches of programme themes or advert music on the fly.

CHRISTOPHER GARDNER, VIA FACEBOOK

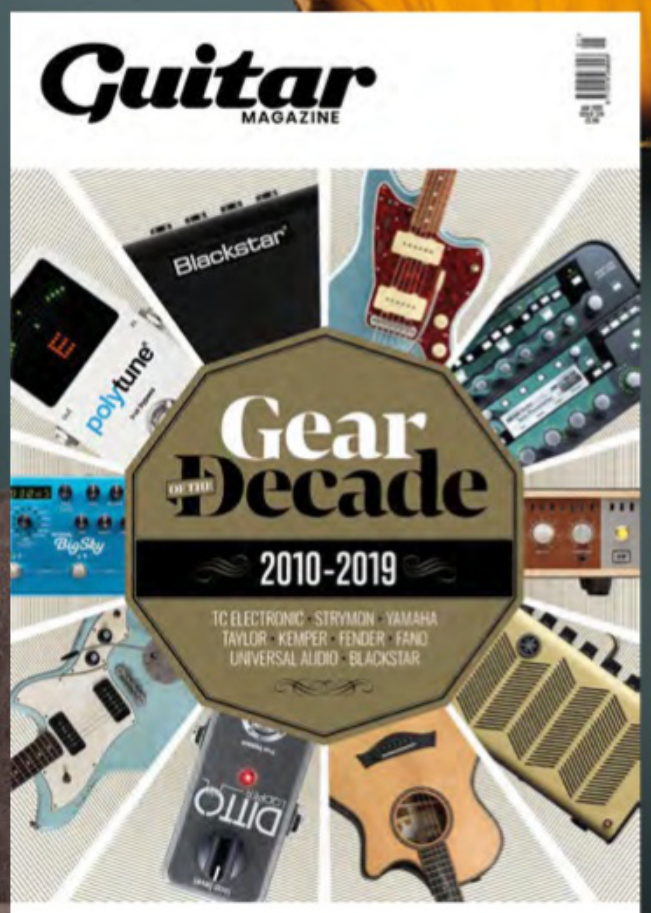
ABOVE. BEYOND. ULTRA.

Fender

NEVER PLAY A STRAT® THE SAME WAY AGAIN.

The American Ultra Stratocaster® HSS in Cobra Blue features an Ultra Double Tap™ humbucking pickup for a fat double-coil tone or a clear, powerful single-coil sound.
American Ultra Series: All-New Body Contours. Ultra Noiseless™ Pickups. Our Fastest-Playing Necks.

©2019 Fender Musical Instruments Corporation. FENDER, FENDER in script, STRAT, STRATOCASTER and the distinctive headstock commonly found on Fender guitars and basses are trademarks of FMIC. Registered in the U.S. and foreign countries. DOUBLE TAP is a U.S. registered trademark. All rights reserved.



THE HERCULES GS414B PLUS

The GS414B PLUS includes the upgraded built-in Auto Grip System with AGS yoke to accommodate more guitar neck sizes, attached NINA (Narrow Instrument Neck Adjustment), instant height-adjustment clutch with locking pin and upgraded foot pads.

Guitar MAGAZINE

FREE HERCULES GUITAR STAND

WHEN YOU SUBSCRIBE*

SAVE 45% ON THE SHOP PRICE*

GET YOUR MONTHLY SUPPLY
OF NEW GEAR REVIEWS,
IN-DEPTH FEATURES,
WORKSHOPS AND TUITION

SPREAD THE COST
BY CONVENIENT DIRECT DEBIT*

FREE UK DELIVERY

PLUS A FREE HERCULES GUITAR STAND WORTH £39.99

NOT IN THE UK?

DON'T WORRY – WE'VE GOT SPECIAL OFFERS FOR INTERNATIONAL READERS, TOO!

EUROPE €43.95 EVERY 6 MONTHS – SAVE 27%
AUSTRALIA $74.25 AUD EVERY 6 MONTHS – SAVE 15%
USA/CANADA $49.95 EVERY 6 MONTHS – SAVE 36%
REST OF THE WORLD £34.75 EVERY 6 MONTHS

ORDER ONLINE TODAY AT GUITAR.COM/SUBSCRIBE

ORDER NOW!

ONLINE
GUITAR.COM/SUBSCRIBE
USE CODE **GMP376**

PHONE
01371 851 882
USE CODE **GMP376**

CODE **GMP376**

OFFER ENDS **31 JANUARY 2020**

*45% saving and guitar stand are available to UK customers paying by Direct Debit only. You will pay just £19.45 every 6 months, saving 45% off the UK cover price. All other savings are based on the local cover price for Europe, Australia and North America and are available when you pay by continuous card payment only. You will receive 12 issues of *Guitar Magazine* per year, starting with the next available issue.

ONES TO WATCH

MERMAIDENS

WORDS SAM ROBERTS

The New Zealand band's guitarist Gussie Larkin on the trio's new LP, their love of riff rock and developing their own chorus pedal…

Look Me In The Eye is the third album from acclaimed Wellington-based band Mermaidens. Drawing on the influences of Warpaint, PJ Harvey and a multitude of riff-orientated rock bands, guitarist Gussie Larkin (above right) and her bandmates Lily West (left) and Abe Hollingsworth (centre) have pushed their sonic limits, producing a vibrant and exploratory new LP.

The viewpoints of both singers and frontwomen help frame the new album, allowing them to create a dialogue on both female collaboration and friendship.

Gussie's tireless work ethic and love for the guitar is apparent throughout the record, which she attributes to "not being very good at relaxing and sitting around." Noted for using a vintage Tokai Hummingbird among other off-kilter six-strings, here she tells us why a Stratocaster copy first kick-started her love of guitars, about finding alternative ways to market the band's new album and promoting diversity in the industry.

What drew you to pick up a guitar?
"Curiosity and a good dose of teenage angst! We had a very sorry-looking classical guitar at home that I plonked away on until my parents gave me a red Strat copy for my 13th birthday. From that point on I felt like picking it up a lot more often!"

Your influences, such as Warpaint and Fugazi, are eclectic. Can you describe what impact they've had on your music?
"Warpaint are one of my most enduring influences. When I discovered them as a 15-year-old I was completely mesmerised by the interplay between each player and the fact that they all took turns singing.

"It was a pretty big thing for me to see a new band made up entirely of women, too. Of course, that had a big impact on my confidence when I was starting out.

"As a mostly self-taught player, I think I'm drawn to guitarists with unusual styles and ways of playing. St Vincent is a guitarist I really admire because you can tell she writes mostly by ear, rather than thinking too much about chord progressions and rules.

"I'm a fan of really riffy bands too, like Fu Manchu, Queens Of The Stone Age and Red Fang to name a few. Maybe that doesn't come through as much in Mermaidens – I have my side project, Earth Tongue for that – but those bands definitely influenced my sense of groove as a guitarist."

“WE WANTED TO COLLABORATE TO GIVE EXPOSURE TO HER TALENTS. THERE’S A SEVERE LACK OF WOMEN WORKING IN THE MUSIC GEAR INDUSTRY, SO WE HOPE THAT THIS PROJECT IS A STEP TOWARDS A MORE EQUAL INDUSTRY”

GUSSIE LARKIN

Your new album *Look Me In The Eye* follows the critically acclaimed P*erfect Body*. Did you feel pressure when recording your third long-player?
“I’m a person who has really high standards of myself so yes, definitely! I think getting the guitar parts right was really important for this album. I don’t have a conventional style so it’s like the guitar is another voice within each song. Recording the guitar parts in the studio is the best bit, and it was great to work closely with our engineer James Goldsmith on the effects. He gets super nerdy and obsessive about tones. We’re a good match!”

You also developed a chorus pedal, the Moon Cycle (pictured), with your former drummer as part of the new LP’s promo. Why choose to design your own pedal?
“We were thinking about how we could promote the album in a more interesting way than just sending out a million press releases. We were in the studio and this idea came up. At that time we were using a lot of analogue delays, choruses and flanger effects on the album so we knew it had to be a chorus pedal.

“Emerald [Rose, fellow Kiwi musician and FX builder] is a really talented guitarist and builder of amps and pedals. We wanted to collaborate with her not only because she’s super-cool but also to give exposure to her talents.

“There’s a severe lack of women working in the music gear industry, so we hope that this project is a step towards a more equal industry. Our bassist Lily illustrated the face of the pedal. She’s behind all our album art, posters, etc.”

What does your current guitar rig look like?
“I use a Catalinbread Topanga reverb pedal which is *always* on. Then I have two analogue delay pedals – an MXR Carbon Copy and a Boss DM-2 from 1983. After that is a flanger that came from a charity store and two Tube Screamers – one for overdrive and the other as a boost.

“My favourite pedal is the New Zealand-made Crowther Hotcake, a tried and true overdrive that can go really fuzzy. Depending on the set, I might add my Russian Big Muff to the chain. If I’m at home in Wellington I’ll be playing through a NZ-made Jansen 8/40 combo. Jansen manufactured guitar amps from the 1960s before concentrating on just PAs, and this one is modelled on a Fender Twin. It rules.”

You’re known for your tireless work ethic, having released three albums in four years and playing with the likes of Mac DeMarco, Sleater-Kinney amongst others. How do you maintain that ethos?
“I’m not very good at relaxing and sitting around. I always feel like I should be doing something, making something! My bandmates are like that too, so I guess we just egg each other on.”

Following the release of *Look Me In The Eye* and your recent UK tour, what’s next for Mermaidens?
“We’ll be supporting Gang Of Four in our hometown. We were listening to them a lot during the recording of our latest album so I’m really excited about that. After that, we’re looking forward to writing some new tunes.”

Mermaidens’ *Look Me In The Eye* is out now on Flying Nun Records

THE PLAYLIST

ALBUM SPOTLIGHT

BODEGA
SHINY NEW MODEL

INTERVIEW SAM ROBERTS

Lead guitarist/producer Madison Velding-VanDam picks his favourite bits from the Brooklyn art-rock quintet's new mini album

Brooklyn's Bodega are a playful yet deadpan group of musicians and creatives. The collective push the boundaries of modern rock with their repertoire of art-infused guitar music, driven by their own brand of pretension and razor-sharp wit. Formed in 2016 following the demise of previous outfit Bodega Bay, the art-rock fivesome have now released new extended EP *Shiny New Model* to follow 2018's debut LP, *Endless Scroll*.

Guitarist/producer Madison Velding-VanDam (far right, above) started as bassist, but is now lead player and main producer. "I'm no loyalist to guitar, though," he says. "While living in Berlin I put the guitar away to work with synthesisers and sequencers."

He insists he only uses Reverend guitars – "primarily the discontinued Warhawk II HB, because it's the most versatile, full-sounding guitar I've ever played and the humbuckers allow me to create sustaining feedback." For pedals, it's an MXR Dyna Comp for sustain – "indispensable" – and TC Electronic Echobrain analogue delays. "I use a Fender Hot Rod DeVille because of how loud I can get this sucker before it breaks up, but I don't love all Fender amps – for example, I think Twin Reverbs are so bright, it's painful. My clean sound is a contrast to the way Ben [Hozie, second right] uses his Vox for a nice smeared saturation on his arpeggios."

TRUTH IS NOT PUNISHMENT

"We re-recorded *Truth Is Not Punishment* for *Shiny New Model*. The new versions represent directions we have taken it live. We're still green when it comes to improvisation. We've started to experiment with different modes and during a section of the jam, Heather [Elle, middle] drops out the major third from her bassline, Ben switches to an atonal harmonic arpeggio and I play primarily Locrian riffs – it gives an almost scary turn to the track."

SHINY NEW MODEL

"We recorded a version of this for *Endless Scroll*, but it felt too summery and saccharine. I staged a bit of a coup to get it off the first record… that said, I think it's great that it's the lead single for this release. The verse guitar part has Ben playing a reinterpretation of Radiohead's *Airbag* chords and my lead riff is an accidental homage to Snow Patrol's *Chasing Cars*!"

JACK IN TITANIC

"Ben has the great strength of arriving with a fully-written song – lyrics, melody, and chords. *Jack In Titanic* was one of those instances but it was missing an unresolved element. I came up with the idea for this pedal-tone riff where the bass defines the chords and the guitar does a simple repetitive punk lead riff, akin to Joy Division's *Transmission*. Ben would later add the big stadium rock guitar hook that follows the chorus."

KNIFE ON THE PLATTER

"Heather's bassline is the hook, so rather than double that, I tried droning chords that would push the mood in an unexpected direction. I ended up with this chime-y 11th chord that to my ear, connects with the mood of *Jack In Titanic*.

"Ben and I always say 'self-plagiarism is style'. Another fun part of this one what is what we've dubbed the 'lightning guitar', which comes in after Nikki [Belfiglio]'s post-chorus vocals. This staccato riff is played with all downstrokes and, when played at the correct tempo, is exactly as fast as my hands can play!"

NAME ESCAPE

"My strongest memories of this song are very early on in the band when I was still on bass. I bought a $100 all-black metal-looking bass at Guitar Center that had the highest action of any instrument I'd ever played. I'm a strong left-hand player, so I could make it work, but Ben's live obsession at the time – and arguably even more so now – was repetition.

"One of our biggest fights came after we played *Name Escape* for 15 minutes and I left the show with my hand locked in a carpal-tunnel claw… I insisted that I switch to guitar after that! Ben eventually agreed and we brought Heather in on bass.

"Austin Brown from Parquet Courts had offered to record us for this EP in a month between tours, so I was tasked with writing the second-guitar parts for this song very quickly. I was improvising a bunch of riffs with Ben when I stumbled on the ascending run that is now one of the track's big hooks. 'That one!' he said immediately. He's got a knack for knowing the hook, so we went with it."

***Shiny New Model* by Bodega is out now on What's Your Rupture?**

This month's essential tracks for guitar lovers…

BOY AZOOGA
O Silly Me

Davey Newington's first single since his critically acclaimed debut album is reminiscent of a meeting between Super Furry Animals and 1970s Beach Boys. A personal song, the intricate guitar work rises into a beautiful crescendo supported by violins and synths as it climaxes.

KEYS
Bad Penny

Keys are arguably Cardiff's best-kept secret. *Bad Penny* comes as part of their fourth album, *Bring Me the Head of Jerry Garcia*, full of psychedelic production, scuzzy guitars and sophisticated compositions.

HAIM
Hallelujah

Haim's third single of the year, *Hallelujah* is accompanied by a video from long-time collaborator Paul Thomas Anderson. Opening with sweet acoustic guitar lines reminiscent of Fleetwood Mac's *Never Going Back Again*, it's more evidence that they're one the decade's finest guitar bands.

NOEL GALLAGHER'S HIGH FLYING BIRDS
Wandering Star

Produced by Gallagher himself, the single comes from his forthcoming EP *Blue Moon Rising*, and was recorded at Abbey Road with the track *Black Star Dancing*. The EP will feature three new songs alongside two remixes of the title track.

MERMAIDENS
I Might Disappear

The subject of this month's Ones To Watch on p14, the Wellington-based trio push their own boundary lines on their latest album, *Look Me In The Eye*. This single is filled with lucid, ambient guitar tones and experimental textures, perfect to get you in the mood for their great new record.

THE BIG MOON
Your Light

Juliette Jackson and co return with the second single from their forthcoming sophomore album. Equipped with driving guitars and effortless harmonised vocals – with a welcome coda at the end – this is arguably their best single yet.

MICHAEL KIWANUKA
Hero

Released as part of the multi-award-winning songwriter's third LP, *Hero* opens with a sharp, arpeggiated guitar riff before the arrival of his trademark vocals. More intelligently composed, high-brow guitar music from Kiwanuka and Danger Mouse.

GENGAHR
Everything & More

Leading the charge for their forthcoming album *Sanctuary*, the album was heavily inspired by Homer's *Odyssey* and produced by Bombay Bicycle Club frontman Jack Steadman. Expect wiry, textural guitars and blooming interludes.

SOCCER MOMMY
Yellow Is The Color Of Her Eyes

Soccer Mommy returns with a sprawling, seven-minute single that also coincides with new UK tour dates for 2020. The track blends her distinctive vocal delivery and vibrato and chorus-drenched guitars, with some chugging rhythms reminiscent of the best of Weezer.

SPORTS TEAM
The Races

Britain's favourite new indie band have released another new single in *The Races*, a charging bull of a track full of angsty guitar and driving bass parts before leading into a rollercoaster of a chorus. Perfect for their anarchic live performances, the band are bound to roll this one out on their current UK tour, which is their biggest to date.

WIN A STERLING BY MUSIC MAN LUKE LK100
WORTH £859!

While the popular Music Man Luke models have a loyal following, there was also a demand for a more affordable option. Up stepped Sterling by Music Man, resulting in the excellent Luke LK100.

The LK100 features two Sterling-designed humbuckers with a push-push pot that delivers a 9V active boost, along with a classic V-shaped roasted maple neck with a rosewood fretboard and 12-inch radius. If that wasn't enough, it also includes the Sterling by Music Man vintage-style tremolo to ensure precise intonation and no shortage of sustain.

For those looking to add a Luke to their arsenal of instruments, the LK100 provides the perfect combination of exceptional quality and affordability. Head to sterlingbymusicman.com to find out more and watch a video demo.

The Sterling by Music Man Luke LK100 is based on the signature model of which famous guitar player?
a) Steve Lukather **b)** Luke Bryan **c)** Luke Pritchard

The closing date for this competition is 23:59 GMT, 3 January 2020. Good luck!

Terms & Conditions

The closing date is **23:59 GMT, 3 January 2020**. The company's decision is final. The competition is open to UK residents only. When entering Guitar Magazine competitions, you will be given the option to receive details of future promotions from BandLab UK Limited and related third parties. If you do not want to receive this information, you can opt out. This giveaway is open to over 18s only. For full terms and conditions, please go to bnd.la/gm-ctos.

THERE ARE GUITARS MADE WITH EBONY

and guitars made with ebony's best interest.

MUSICIANS WILL TELL YOU THAT GUITARS MADE FROM WOOD SOUND BETTER AND FEEL BETTER. BUT FEW GUITAR PLAYERS COULD TELL YOU WHERE THAT WOOD COMES FROM—OR WHO HARVESTED IT. WHEN IT CAME TO EBONY, TAYLOR COULDN'T DO MUCH BETTER, EVEN THOUGH WE HAD ALWAYS USED IT FOR OUR FINGERBOARDS. THEN IN 2011 WE BOUGHT AN EBONY MILL IN CAMEROON. WANTING TO PROTECT THIS PRECIOUS TONEWOOD FOR THE FUTURE, WE QUICKLY FOUND OUR 65 MILLWORKERS DESERVED THE SAME CONSIDERATION. ALONG WITH INTRODUCING PAY INCREASES AND BENEFITS, WE ALSO IMPROVED WORKING CONDITIONS AND WORKPLACE SAFETY—CHANGES THAT CONTINUE TO TRANSFORM LIVES AND NURTURE AN ENTIRE COMMUNITY. TO US, IT'S PROOF THAT THE BEST INTEREST OF EBONY MIGHT JUST BE THE BEST INTEREST OF EVERYONE: AFRICAN MILLWORKERS AND MUSIC LOVERS ALIKE. WATCH THE FULL STORY

at taylorguitars.com/ebonyproject

QUALITY Taylor® GUITARS

Step forward. MUSIC IS WAITING.™

©2018 TAYLOR GUITARS

Guitar MAGAZINE

Gear of the Decade

Since 2010, we've seen seismic changes in the way music is consumed and created, while technology has made pro guitar sounds more accessible than ever before. Here are the 10 pieces of guitar gear that represent the most game-changing, innovative and desirable product releases of the last 10 years…

WORDS CHRIS VINNICOMBE

2020. It certainly sounds futuristic, but as we approach the dawn of a new decade, it's hard not to feel shortchanged by the promises of science-fiction that remain undelivered. It's probably a good thing *everything* hasn't come to fruition – some of the more dystopian futures depicted in sci-fi are unlikely to satisfy anybody's definition of an appealing holiday destination. But on the other hand, whatever happened to flying cars and teleportation? Ideally without getting genetically spliced with a fly, of course…

All that said, wind the clock back to 1 January 2010 and the world was a very different place. Spotify was in its infancy, Instagram was preparing to launch. YouTube was already serving nearly two billion video views each day but 'influencer' culture was still nascent and Apple Music was another five years away. What does all that have to do with guitar gear? Well, loads actually.

Over the last decade, mainstream music consumption has shifted to a streaming model that has torn down tribal and temporal boundaries and put Billie Eilish and Post Malone on the same stage as The Beatles and The Stones. The guitar might not be the fulcrum of pop culture as it was in the 50s and 60s, but it's been ever-present while a whole new breed of players have emerged for whom social media is the most important concert venue and shop window of all.

While guitar might be their instrument of choice, it's certainly not indicative of a genre-bias towards rock or metal. And these are the next-generation guitar players that luthiers, pedal builders and amp designers need to consider while they beaver away in R&D departments in all corners of the globe.

Some manufacturers have got close, but it feels like that silver bullet product for contemporary players is still elusive. Imagine one small box that's an audio interface, HD amp modeller, looper and learning aid, plugs directly into your smartphone and plays nicely with its video capabilities. Arguably, it would be a hell of a lot more relevant for beginners than the tiny transistor combos that still find their way into starter packs – if most kids today would prefer to be a YouTuber than a rock star, let's give them the tools they need. Maybe, in the process, it'll do something to address that oft-quoted 90 per cent abandonment rate among new players during their first year of learning.

So here's to the roaring twenties that lie ahead, and whatever innovations the next 10 years will bring. But first, read on to find out which products we think have been the most important, most innovative and best in class over the past decade…

Guitar Magazine Gear of the Decade 2010

TC ELECTRONIC POLYTUNE

tcelectronic.com

Prior to the launch of the PolyTune, the stage-tuner market was dominated by the Boss TU-2. Boss units featured on the pedalboards of pretty much everyone, from pub players to pros, but this affordable polyphonic tuner seemed to knock the TU-2 off its perch almost overnight.

Nowadays, whether in stompbox, mini-stompbox, clip-on or iOS app form, TC's PolyTune tech is so ubiquitous it's hard to imagine life without it. There are players with more sophisticated tuning requirements than it can handle, but for most of us, PolyTune ticks all the boxes. Version 3 includes polyphonic, chromatic and strobe modes and switchable true/buffered bypass.

KEMPER PROFILING AMP

kemper-amps.com

Guitar Magazine Gear of the Decade 2011

Christoph Kemper's company had been making the Access Virus synthesiser for 15 years before his fascination with distortion would lead to the development of an algorithm that could accurately 'profile' the analogue, tube-driven circuits responsible for the most-loved guitar sounds of all time.

When the first review samples arrived in early 2012, I remember standing in a studio with a couple of colleagues and genuinely wondering if this was all some kind of elaborate hoax. Our hilarity at the *Twilight Zone* noises generated by the profiling process quickly switched to slack-jawed amazement as we AB'd between the mic'd recording of a JTM45 and the profile. Through studio monitors they were virtually indistinguishable.

Not only did the Kemper Profiler's release represent the moment that digital amp modelling truly came of age, it turned the process on its head and democratised it, allowing the end user to create their own amp models.

Suddenly, artists could tour the world with precise snapshots of the analogue tones they used in the studio, with travel costs slashed and a happy sound engineer (insert your own joke here) getting a consistent tone every night. Producers could fly into a session with a library of classic amplifiers in their carry-on luggage. And – via innumerable profiles available online – any Kemper owner now had access to a virtual amplifier collection beyond their wildest dreams. Plenty of products claim to be revolutionary, this was the real thing.

YAMAHA THR

yamaha.com

The key to serious paydirt in product design is to create something that nobody realises they need, and make it seem indispensable. On arrival, Yamaha's THR's 'third amp' concept dovetailed perfectly with modern living – made to sit elegantly on a desk or shelf and be no more obtrusive than a DAB radio or bluetooth speaker, the battery or mains-powered THR10 and THR5 models delivered rich and surprisingly three-dimensional tones from compact enclosures. And although they were conceived with the living room in mind, we've even seen people gig them.

The THR's simplicity belied its deep-editing and USB audio capabilities but as the decade wore on, the act of hooking an amplifier up to a computer in order to edit parameters or even using a guitar cable when playing at home began to feel a little… tired. First-world problems, indeed.

Happily, 2019 saw Yamaha reboot THR with new MKII versions equipped with Bluetooth for audio playback and mobile editing, and a built-in wireless receiver designed to work with the Line 6 G10T transmitter. But before you slip into the warm embrace of muscle atrophy, note that the outdoor potential of THR-II is further enhanced by ditching AAs in favour of a rechargeable lithium ion battery with up to five hours of use from one charge. A design for life, refined.

TC ELECTRONIC DITTO LOOPER

tcelectronic.com

Les Paul and a Marshall? Telecaster and an AC30? Nope. Over the past decade, the combination of an acoustic guitar and a looper has become the go-to live rig for aspiring young songwriters.

While looping diehards crave the near-limitless possibilities of units such as the Boss RC-300, the majority of us just want to lay down a basic percussive rhythm and some chords and noodle over the top – something that makes solo practice and songwriting sessions exponentially more rewarding.

If you fall into the latter camp, the TC Ditto is still a no-brainer purchase today. On its launch in 2013, this decidedly compact unit was a simple and affordable gateway drug into the world of looping that chimed with the trend for space-saving stompboxes. Much like the PolyTune, it soon started to appear on pedalboards everywhere…

STRYMON BIGSKY

strymon.net

In the world of guitar-effects junkies and sonic explorers, Strymon is king. The Californian brand was born in 2009 when Damage Control discontinued its product line and began building products under the Strymon name. If you're the type of guitar player who gets most of your tone from your pedalboard, there's a strong chance that you're either lusting after a Strymon unit, you already own one, or you own several.

Building on the success of the BlueSky Reverberator, the BigSky arrived in a larger form-factor and its motherlode of ethereal reverbs can be heard all over modern guitar music. If in doubt, flip to the Cloud mode and bathe in the atmospherics for several hours – single notes have never sounded so good. One reverb pedal to rule them all? Almost certainly. The BigSky is the Instagram generation's DL4.

BLACKSTAR FLY 3

blackstaramps.com

Make no bones about it, battery-powered micro amps used to sound *rubbish*. Fizzy, waspish novelty items that were scarcely better than no amplifier at all… there must be whole islands in the Pacific made from them. Then came the Blackstar Fly, which – despite its name – quickly generated a more desirable kind of buzz.

Pushing three watts out of a three-inch speaker, the Fly really has no right to sound decent, but it does. Undoubtedly the biggest-sounding little amp out there, from clean to mean, the Fly is great for a quick noodle or jamming along with your mate's acoustic. The tape-style delay effect is a nice addition and 2017's Bluetooth version added wireless audio playback for soloing over backing tracks or indulging in some casual music listening. And every guitar that comes into the office still gets plugged into a Blackstar Fly first!

NOVO GUITARS SERUS J

novoguitars.com

When it comes to retro hybrids with distressed paint jobs, Dennis Fano blazed a trail long before it was fashionable, and his influence can be seen in the workshops of boutique guitar-makers across the world. Launched following his departure from Premier Builders Guild and Fano Guitars, Novo finds Dennis at the peak of his powers, and he and his small Nashville-based team are building some of the best bolt-ons on the planet.

The Novo range is based around one offset body outline, but it incorporates a wide variety of variations and custom options. Frankly, we could have chosen any of the solidbody Serus or thinline Miris models, but the Serus J perhaps best captures the zeitgeist. Even in a market that's fit to burst, if you are looking for a boutique offset, Novos are as good as it gets – light, supremely resonant and necks to die for.

UNIVERSAL AUDIO OX AMP TOP BOX

uaudio.com

Some of the most successful products of recent times have been endlessly useful problem-solvers, and Universal Audio's OX is one such example. Speaker attenuation, a reactive dummy load, sophisticated digital cabinet, mic and room emulations, wireless app control… there are many strings to the OX's bow. But fundamentally, it's a one-stop shop for guitar recording, practice and performance that allows you to use your preferred tube amp with its sweet spot dialled in, at manageable volumes. And it does all of the above with a finesse and simplicity that never makes the experience of using it feel like homework.

Want to carry on using the amp you love but give the sound engineer a studio-quality feed with a choice of virtual mics, cabinets and outboard effects? Want to record a cranked amp at home and get a pro-studio sound without waking up the neighbours? Just want to play through a valve combo at 4am on headphones? The OX makes all of this possible and more. And following its launch, by the time the next NAMM show came around, dozens of MI companies had OX units on their stands as a product demo solution. We'd call that a ringing endorsement.

TAYLOR V-CLASS BRACING

taylorguitars.com

Although the past decade has seen digital guitar technology come of age, it's reassuring to note that a human armed with a chisel and old-fashioned ingenuity is still capable of making waves. Indeed, waves of both surf and sound informed perhaps the biggest revolution in internal acoustic-guitar architecture since the dawn of X-bracing.

One early morning following a storm, Andy Powers – Taylor Guitars' master guitar designer and now its third partner alongside co-founders Bob Taylor and Kurt Listug – was watching the surf near his Southern California home. He noticed waves breaking around a stone jetty and dividing into equal parts on either side, and it was at this point that Powers began to sketch the seed of an idea that would light the way out of what he saw as the "design cul-de-sac" of X-bracing.

The implications for projection, sustain and intonation were breathtaking. Not only did V-Class bracing live up to the hype, it fixed many of the issues that can make flat-top acoustics the 'problem child' alongside perfectly tuned electronic sounds in a modern recording environment.

In 2019, we found out what happens when the V-Class idea is applied to a 12-string – the answer is quite simply the most in-tune 12 we've ever heard (read the review on p96). Nobody can say for sure what innovations the next decade will bring to acoustic guitar design and manufacture, but there's little doubt that Andy Powers will lead the vanguard.

FENDER VINTERA ’60S JAZZMASTER

fender.com

Has this been the decade of the Jazzmaster? In the 60 years since its arrival in the Fender catalogue as the top-of-the-line electric guitar, Leo’s much-misunderstood offset-body electric has enjoyed the occasional renaissance. Yet the Instagram era has seen the Jazzmaster reach levels of mainstream acceptance beyond even its time in the sun during the alt-rock explosion of the early 1990s.

During the past decade, Fender offsets have been *everywhere*, with artists as diverse as Jim Root, Chelsea Wolfe, Troy Van Leeuwen and Sam Fender taking the Jazzmaster way beyond surf tones and spy movies. Prices have been rising steadily on vintage models, too, with ‘Jazzmaster’ consistently proving to be one of *Reverb.com*’s top search terms.

Fender’s Classic Player model was the company’s biggest-selling Jazzmaster ever, and 2019’s updated Vintera incarnation proved to be the fastest-selling JM of the decade. Looking for an affordable offset with vintage-style appointments? Of course you are. This is it.

Guitar

What is the best guitar product you’ve bought over the last 10 years? Head to our social media channels @guitar and let us know, or write to editors@guitar.com.

18+

WHAT IS AVAXHOME?

AVAXHOME-

the biggest Internet portal, providing you various content: brand new books, trending movies, fresh magazines, hot games, recent software, latest music releases.

Unlimited satisfaction one low price
Cheap constant access to piping hot media
Protect your downloadings from Big brother
Safer, than torrent-trackers

18 years of seamless operation and our users' satisfaction

All languages
Brand new content
One site

AVXLIVE.ICU

AvaxHome - Your End Place

We have everything for all of your needs. Just open https://avxlive.icu

ERNIE BALL
POWER SLINKY
2220
MADE IN USA
REGULAR SLINKY
NOT EVEN SLINKY
2626
BEEFY SLINKY
PRIMO SLINKY
EXTRA SLINKY
SUPER SLINKY
2223
SKINNY TOP HEAVY BOTTOM
2215
MAMMOTH SLINKY
2214
MEGA SLINKY
2213
BURLY SLINKY
2228
ULTRA SLINKY
10 13 17 28 38 48
CUSTOM GAUGE NICKEL WOUND GUITAR STRINGS
2227

Guitar MAGAZINE

Gear of the Year 2019

2019 has been another banner year for all things guitar, and as we stand on the precipice of 2020, what better time to look back and examine the best products that have crossed our path in the last 12 months? This year, however, we've done things a little differently – in addition to canvassing opinions from our expert panel of reviewers, we also opened the polls to the readers of *Guitar.com*, who voted in their thousands for their favourite guitars, amps and effects of the year. What follows is our ultimate guide to the very best new gear of 2019…

Guitar 2019 • GEAR OF THE YEAR • WINNER

Best Premium Electric Guitar

GIBSON CUSTOM 60TH ANNIVERSARY 1959 LES PAUL STANDARD

The flagship offering from Gibson's 2019 revival, this 60th birthday tribute to the most famous Les Paul of them all is a effectively an attempt to 'clone' the original. From period-correct hangtags to 3D-scanned top and neck carves and chemically recreated old-school plastics, the idea is to give Les Paul aficionados a Burst reissue that ticks all the right boxes without costing as much as a house. Overall, this is a dream guitar for most players and Gibson Custom has done a fine job of recreating a mid-century classic for the modern world.

PRICE £5,199
MORE INFO gibson.com

GRETSCH
G6620T PLAYERS EDITION NASHVILLE CENTER BLOCK DOUBLE-CUT

WE SAID "A versatile step forward from previous Center Block models that still retains plenty of Gretsch character"
PRICE £2,389
MORE INFO gretschguitars.com

EASTMAN
ROMEO

WE SAID "Versatile and soulful, there's much to love about this classy new original hollowbody design from Eastman"
PRICE £1,950
MORE INFO eastmanguitars.com

ALSO NOMINATED

Bunting Melody Queen **£2,750**, Gibson SG Junior **£1,149**, Macmull Guitars Heartbreaker Custom **£4,495**, Millimetric Instruments MGS2 **£2,500**, Music Man Valentine Tremolo **£2,649**, Novo Mirus J **£4,199**, Vuorensaku T Family 'Birke' **£3,899**

Guitar 2019 • GEAR OF THE YEAR • WINNER

Best Affordable Electric Guitar

FENDER
VINTERA '50S TELECASTER

Looking for your first 'proper' Telecaster? This is it. Fender's update of its Mexico-made Classic and Classic Player Series guitars under the Vintera banner offers a bounty of vintage-informed instruments, but it's the '50s Telecaster we'd take home. Whether your tone tastes veer towards Bloomfield or Bakersfield, it's all taken care of thanks to a pair of Tim Shaw-designed alnico V single-coils. Add to that the kind of characterful, chunky neck you don't see too often at this end of the market, and it's every inch a serious guitar.

PRICE £749
MORE INFO fender.com

STERLING BY MUSIC MAN
ST VINCENT HH

WE SAID "With stellar playability and tones, this sensibly-priced, distinctive signature instrument is very close to greatness"
PRICE £799
MORE INFO sterlingbymusicman.com

CHAPMAN GUITARS
ML1 CAP10

WE SAID "For a Strat-style guitar with a little more under the hood, the Chapman CAP10 is a must-try"
PRICE £719
MORE INFO andertons.co.uk

ALSO NOMINATED

Chapman V2 ML2 Modern Standard **£499**, Gibson Les Paul Tribute **£999**, Fender Vintera '60s Jazzmaster Modified **£899**, Fender American Performer Stratocaster **£999**, Harmony Jupiter **£1,049**, Shergold Provocateur SP02-SD **£809**, Supro 1926 Silverwood **£1,049**

Guitar 2019 • GEAR OF THE YEAR • WINNER

Best Acoustic Guitar

TAYLOR BUILDER'S EDITION 717E GRAND PACIFIC

Taylor's new Grand Pacific body shape reflects a spirit of innovation mixed with vintage sensibilities – something that master guitar designer (and now partner) Andy Powers has brought to Taylor Guitars in spades since he joined the company. There isn't a harsh tone to be had, the sonic character is boldly clear and assertive and there are plenty of dynamics and tonal variations. The 717e offers the most refined and balanced example of the company's revolutionary V-Class bracing yet, with fabulous looks and a serious high-end vibe.

PRICE £3,359

MORE INFO taylorguitars.com

SHEERAN BY LOWDEN
S04

WE SAID "Visually and sonically, this is every inch a Lowden for the short of pocket"
PRICE £965
MORE INFO sheeranguitars.com

EASTMAN
DOUBLE TOP SERIES DT30D

WE SAID "Classic styling and materials combine with stealthy innovation for something enjoyably different"
PRICE £2,199
MORE INFO eastmanguitars.com

ALSO NOMINATED

Auden Artist Julia Mahogany **£1,299**, B&G Caletta Crossroads **£1,920**, Dearnaley Guitars Natural **£2,500**, Taylor 362ce V-Class 12-string **£2,799**, Martin D-28 Modern Deluxe **£4,295**, Lowden F32 **£3,099**

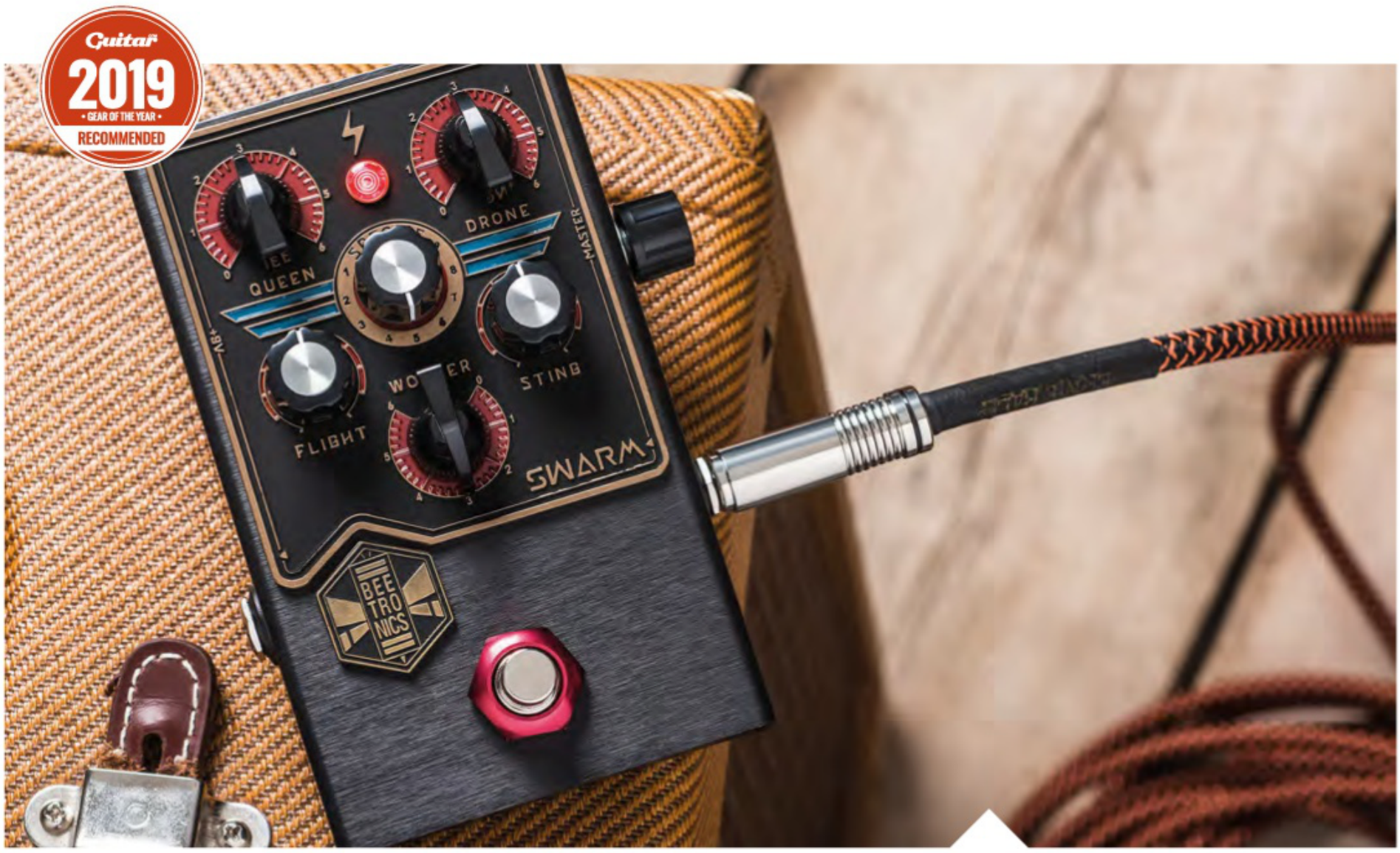
Guitar 2019 • GEAR OF THE YEAR • WINNER

Best Effects Pedal

STRYMON VOLANTE

The Volante is one of the Californian company's most interesting and best-sounding pedals yet. Where the Brigadier simulates analogue BBD, the El Capitan melds tape-echo and reverb and the TimeLine dabbles in retro and hi-fi echo, the Volante is a one-stop solution for vintage-style echo effects. These range from drum-style echo to tape echo to studio-style reel-to-reel delay. It is a pretty sizeable unit, but considering you have the power of multiple pedals in one, making space on your 'board is going to be worth it.

PRICE £399 **MORE INFO** strymon.net



BEETRONICS
SWARM

WE SAID "The insect-loving Californians' latest luxury pedal is a box of sonic chaos with honey-sweet fuzz at its core"
PRICE £269
MORE INFO beetronicsfx.com

KEELEY
FUZZ BENDER

WE SAID "A sensational, versatile fuzz pedal which will appeal to connoisseurs and novices alike"
PRICE £149
MORE INFO robertkeeley.com

ALSO NOMINATED

Becos ComplQ Pro Stella Compressor **$349**, EarthQuaker Devices Plumes **£105**, King Tone The Duellist **£223**, Redbeard Effects Red Mist Mk IV **£189**, Teisco Boost **£149**, ThorpyFX Heavy Water **£189**, Walrus Audio Slö Multi Texture Reverb **£192**

Best Guitar Accessory

BLACKSTAR AMPLUG 2 FLY

Adding Blackstar's small-amp wizardry to what was already a fun product has created the best-sounding amPlugs yet. Particularly with clean sounds, there's a warmth and depth to the amPlug's tones that even the regular Fly can't match through headphones. When adding a bit of spacey delay or reverb into the mix, it really does offer an engaging, three-dimensional feel.

PRICE £42
MORE INFO blackstaramps.com

EARTHQUAKER DEVICES SWISS THINGS PEDALBOARD RECONCILER

WE SAID "A great switcher that could transform how you approach your pedalboard and amps"
PRICE £249
MORE INFO earthquakerdevices.com

IK MULTIMEDIA AXE I/O

WE SAID "A fantastic, feature-packed unit for anyone just starting out on their recording journey"
PRICE £369
MORE INFO ikmultimedia.com

ALSO NOMINATED

Tul Microphones G12 Retro **$289**, IsoAcoustics Stage 1 **£129**

Marshall

STUDIO VINTAGE

SHRINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

MORE COMPACT, SAME IMPACT.

Transport the greats with you. The studio range brings you those iconic Marshall tones in a portable 20W format.

MARSHALL.COM

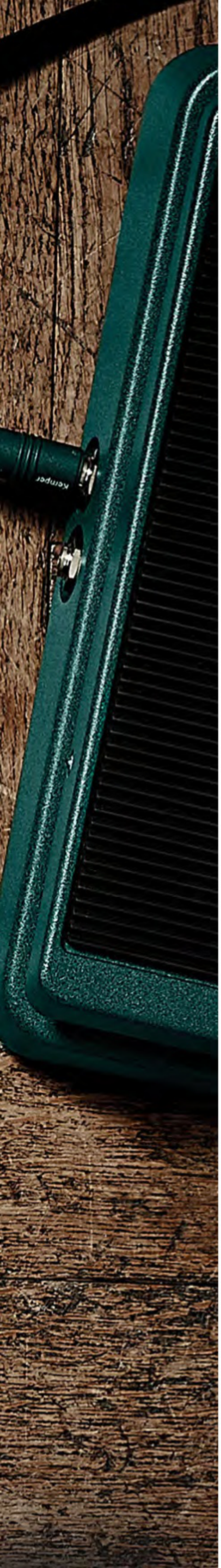
Best Multi-Effects Pedal

KEMPER PROFILER STAGE

The Stage condenses Kemper's revolutionary profiling tech – and the almost limitless sonic possibilities therein – into a floor-based unit. It's impossible not to stumble upon a sound that will inspire you, and if you haven't yet been convinced to make the jump from analogue to digital, the ease of transition and compact form factor this unit offers means there's never been a better time to embrace modernity. Like countless others, you are unlikely to regret it.

PRICE £1,450

MORE INFO kemper-amps.com



MOOER
GE300

WE SAID "A modern multi-effects with huge versatility and depth that deserves a place on your must-try list"
PRICE £745
MORE INFO mooeraudio.co.uk

FENDER
TRE-VERB

WE SAID "The Tre-Verb is a handy pairing of tasty tremolo and reverb, with plenty of tweakability onboard"
PRICE £199
MORE INFO fender.com

ALSO NOMINATED

Keeley Electronics DDR Drive Delay Reverb **£179**,
Electro-Harmonix Grand Canyon **£230**

Guitar 2019 • GEAR OF THE YEAR • WINNER

Best Electric Guitar Amp

ORANGE TREMLORD 30

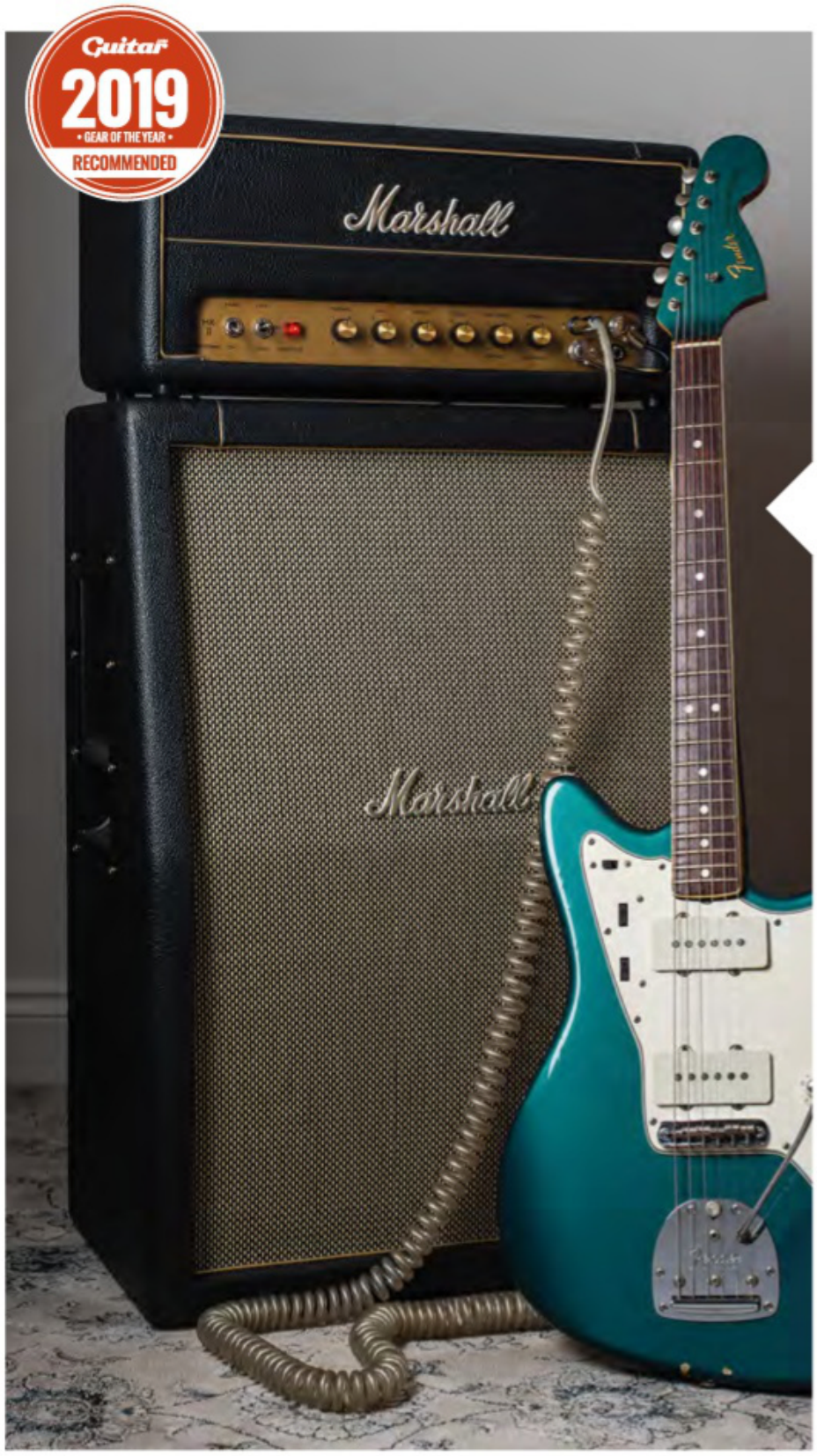
Orange describes the TremLord as "our very British take on the 1950s amplifier", but the tones on offer are more reminiscent of Peter Green's Fleetwood Mac and the era during which London was swinging and Orange founder Cliff Cooper first opened the doors at New Compton Street. The TremLord's vibe is decidedly more vintage than we've become accustomed to from Orange in recent years, while the combination of spring reverb and a subtle tremolo throb creates a beautiful fog to get lost in. Two footswitchable tremolo speeds are the icing on an especially tasty cake.

PRICE £999

MORE INFO orangeamps.com

BOSS
KATANA-50 MKII

WE SAID "Now with added versatility, this baby combo from the Katana's second-generation kicks out some seriously grown-up guitar tones"
PRICE £237
MORE INFO boss.info



MARSHALL
STUDIO VINTAGE SV20H

WE SAID "Once you link the channels, this is a very convincing low-wattage take on a high-wattage classic"
PRICE £875
MORE INFO marshall.com

ALSO NOMINATED

Blackstar HT-20R MkII **£649**, Blackstar Silverline Stereo Deluxe **£749**, Carr Telstar **£2,449**, Rift Amplification Aynsley Lister Signature **£2,799**, Supro 1696RT Black Magick Reverb **£1,529**, Supro 1812R Blues King 12 **£599**, Two-Rock Studio Signature **£2,599**

R E
B
E L

Make Your Own Rules

Stand out with the all-new **Harmony Rebel**.

Features:

- Made in USA
- Genuine mahogany body
- Nitrocellulose lacquer finish
- Bone nut
- Custom gold foil humbuckers
- Custom half bridge with compensated saddles
- Locking tuners
- Comes with free MONO® Vertigo Electric Guitar Case

Available in Burgundy, Champagne and Pearl White

Harmony
— SINCE 1892 —

www.harmony.co

THE *Guitar* INTERVIEW

NOEL GALLAGHER

Ahead of his third High Flying Birds EP, *Blue Moon Rising*, the legendary Oasis songwriter and solo star sat down with *Guitar Magazine* to talk Strats, Jazzmasters and a forthcoming Gibson signature guitar...

WORDS JEFF SLATE **PORTRAITS** RACHEL NAOMI

"I'm supposed to go to this gig tonight in Brooklyn, but I don't know," Noel Gallagher says, his voice trailing off as we sit down for coffee in the Penthouse café of his Midtown Manhattan hotel, one rainy afternoon recently.

Even Noel Gallagher doesn't want to go to Brooklyn.

We've encountered Gallagher many times since he left Oasis, but he seems more relaxed than ever this time, as we chat about shared interests and mutual friends. In person Noel is short, even slight. But he's an intense presence, too. Wearing black trousers and an expensive looking black t-shirt, topped with a gold chain and pendant, it's the ever-present sunglasses that are seemingly there to keep you in your place.

"I picked them up cheap at Harvey Nichols," he says, proudly, when we enquire, lightening the mood considerably.

We're here to talk guitars, and his new EP, *Blue Moon Rising*, the third in a series that marks a stark departure from his Oasis days, his early solo work, or even his latest, Dave Holmes-produced *Who Built The Moon?*, from 2017. A mixture of Ibiza-style dance tracks and Bowie, Stones Roses, and Smiths-influenced pop songs, there's been a love/hate response from his rabid audience.

"I don't really care," Gallagher waves us off, when we mention the negative chatter amongst some of his oldest, and once loyal, fans. "I'm not really making music for them, am I?"

It's true, if his brother Liam has made no secret of trying to capture the Oasis nostalgia market with his two solo albums and, especially, his live shows, the elder Gallagher has flexed his creative muscles repeatedly, even on his first solo album, 2011's *Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds*.

"Before I started that record, I had acoustic demos, and I listened to them for quite a while before I actually recorded them, so by the time I got in there to record them, I had a fair idea of what I wanted to do with them," he explains. "But I never thought I was making that record for my fans. I was just trying to serve the songs. On the second record, when I played people *The Right Stuff*, they said, 'Well, *that's* a bit different.' But I didn't care. If it's a good recording of a great tune, that's all that matters to me. I wasn't thinking 'Wow, this will really fuck with people.' I wouldn't do that. Because all that matters to me is the song."

DON'T LOOK BACK?

That second record, *Chasing Yesterday*, from 2015, was indeed a departure, but still hewed pretty closely to the past in many respects. *Who Built The Moon?* changed all that.

While he'd worked with The Chemical Brothers in the 90s, and never made a secret of his love for Manchester's Haçienda-era club music, many diehard fans were up in arms at Gallagher's seeming creative left turn. But for him, it was just part of the process of following the example of his friend and mentor, Paul Weller.

"When I went to make the last album with David Holmes, he famously said to me on the second

© Getty Images / Joseph Okpako

"A LOT OF THESE NEW TRACKS STARTED WITH A BASSLINE, AND I'LL FIDDLE WITH GADGETS, BECAUSE I LIKE A BOX THAT MAKES NOISE. BUT I'LL INSTANTLY THROW THE MANUAL AWAY, BECAUSE IT'S JUST JARGON AND GOBBLEDYGOOK FOR ME"

THIS PAGE Noel Gallagher with one of the Nash T-style guitars that have become recent favourites

OPPOSITE With the Gibson J-150 (note Adidas sticker above soundhole) that was a live staple in the 2000s, particularly. Noel reveals that a Gibson signature model is in the works

day, 'Do you have to play the guitar all the time?'" Gallagher says with a laugh.

"I looked at him and I thought, 'Google my fucking name there for a second.' I said, 'What else am I going to play?' He said, 'Can you play keyboards?' I said 'No.' And he said, 'Great. You're going to play keyboards.' It seemed mad, but once I'd written a few songs like that, it was actually really fucking liberating. So when I use guitar now, like on the new EPs, they just kind of drift in and out."

Although the new music he's making is once again self-produced, Gallagher says he can't be bothered with the technical aspects of the recording process.

"A lot of these new tracks started with a bassline," he explains. "And I'll fiddle with the gadgets, because I like a box that makes noise. But I'll instantly throw the manual away, because it's just jargon and gobbledygook for me. I can't fucking stand any of it. I'll spend an hour trying to switch it on.

"I could eventually work out how to use it, but I've got this engineer, Paul Stacey, and this other guy Emre Ramazanoglu, who are absolute fucking wizards on the computer. Emre, he's not showing me how to do stuff, but when I have these outlandish ideas and I ask, 'Is it possible to do that?' – pew – it's done. Sounds amazing. Like, wow. I've been missing out sitting there strumming this fucking J-200."

Of course, second only to his prowess as a world-class songwriter, Gallagher is known as a formidable melodic guitarist, with an eclectic and fearsome collection of vintage and bespoke guitars.

"Gibson is doing a signature model of that one," Gallagher says, when we ask about the J-200 he was referring to, the infamous sunburst model from his Oasis days, with the Adidas sticker above the soundhole. "I sent it there to be photographed, the

© Getty Images / Joseph Okpako

© Getty Images / Mariano Regidor

© Getty Images / Ross Gilmore

"I DON'T HAVE A GO-TO GUITAR THAT I WRITE ON. I'LL HAVE A GUITAR FOR A COUPLE OF YEARS, BUT THEN IT'LL FEEL LIKE IT'S ALL USED UP, SO I'LL SEND THAT ONE BACK TO MY LOCK-UP. I'VE GOT A LOT THERE, SO I'LL JUST PICK ONE AT RANDOM, BECAUSE I THINK ALL GUITARS HAVE GOT SONGS IN THEM"

grain and the whole thing. It's not even a J-200, you know. It's a J-150 that I just took off the shelf in London, played it, and I was like, 'Yeah, I'll take it.' I never thought anything of it. But I've written some great fucking songs on that guitar.

"They only made them for a couple of years. In fact, I just this year I found a blonde one, which I got off *Reverb.com*. I try not to buy guitars off the Internet, because you've got to fucking hold them first, and it was a bit expensive, but I thought, 'Fuck it. I'll just go for it.' It arrived and it was amazing. I'm playing it on tour with U2."

Of course he's also got several guitars that pal, and early Oasis booster Johnny Marr, lent him back in the earliest days of the band.

"I never gave them back," he says with a chuckle. "He's given me three or four guitars over the years. The first one was a Les Paul that belonged to Pete Townshend. That one got damaged, so then he gave me the black Les Paul that was the guitar he used on *The Queen Is Dead*. And he gave me a Stratocaster that I wrote and recorded *Don't Look Back In Anger* on. He's not getting them now."

BACK TO BASICS

While in the Oasis days he used to arrive at the studio with an array of guitars culled from his formidable arsenal – based on his mood at the time, or the sonic direction in which he felt the songs should go – now he says he simply takes one guitar and a bag of pedals.

"I'm making a different kind of music now," Noel Gallagher confesses. "*Who Built The Moon?* is all a Nash Strat and a brand-new Fender 'silverface' Princeton. And on the three new EPs that I've done, I used *one* guitar. It's The Edge's signature Strat, by Fender. It's fucking amazing. It's a copy of his 1974 Strat, the black one. And it's hands-down one of the best guitars I've ever played in my life."

At home, Gallagher reveals, he likes to rotate his guitars.

"I don't have a go-to guitar that I write on," he explains. "I'll have a guitar for a couple of years, but then it'll feel like it's all used up, so I'll send that one back to my lock-up. I've got a lot there, so I'll just pick one at random, because I think all guitars have got songs in them. Sometimes I'll want to have an acoustic. For a while it was a Nash Strat. Lately I've been playing bass around the house, endlessly, and that's how most of the new songs started, in fact."

On tour, along with the blonde Gibson J-150, Gallagher is in some ways back to basics.

THIS SPREAD With a Nash Guitars JM63, in the style of a Fender Jazzmaster, and (above) his "priceless" 1960 Gibson ES-355

REVIVE YOUR GUITAR

NEW LOWDEN CLEANING PRODUCTS

lowdenguitars.com/guitarcare

Scan Here

"I'm playing Jazzmasters, both by Fender and Nash," he says. "You know, I was never a fan of Strats or offset guitars. But I was on tour, and I saw this Nash Jazzmaster – a natural one – and I bought it. And I've since got to know Bill Nash, and now I've got about 20 of his guitars. And I swear by them. His Teles are amazing, too. And Fender's new Vintera series is really good. I don't like the far-out fucking designs. I like the real simple ones."

So is there one guitar, we ask Gallagher as we wrap up, that he simply couldn't live without?

"My favourite electric guitar I bought in the 90s," he says without hesitation. "It's the 1960 Gibson 355 that I played in Oasis. I don't play it so much nowadays, because the music I'm writing is different and I'm going for a different sound. But if push came to shove, that guitar is priceless for the amount of tunes that I wrote on it."

As we part, we ask Gallagher if, now the third of his trifecta of EPs is due for release in March 2020, we'll be getting a new album proper in the near future.

"Apart from the odd festival date next summer, I think I'm going to try to take 2020 off," he tells us. "Now, that being said, my missus may have something to say about that. Plus, I've got a load of songs, they've just got to be knocked into shape. On the way down to meet you I was working on them on my iPad, making another list. I have a list of things – 'I must do that' – but actually, once the Christmas EP is out of the way, I'm going to take a step back.

"I just need to get away from it for a bit. So I don't think I'll start to make an album seriously till 2021. The thing is, there's a generation now, between 15 and 18 years old, that have just got into the Oasis thing. They've never heard most of what I've done, that's for sure.

"But really, they have no idea what was going on before. So for those little pricks, I'll take great pleasure in ruining their days." G

© Getty Images / Steve Jennings

THIS PAGE With a genuine Fender Jazzmaster in white: "I don't like far-out designs. I like the real simple ones"

EVERGREENS DO NOT SUFFER FROM ALZHEIMER'S.

Carol is no longer who she used to be.

She no longer recognises Nancy, her sister, or Jim, her husband. Most of the time it's as though she isn't aware of the things going on around her.

But when Nancy carefully puts headphones over Carol's ears and plays her most beloved song, her sister's eyes light up. She gently sways to the beat of the song, she even remembers the dance routine. She may nudge Jim's arm. Or tell him what a fun guy he is. For the duration of that song, she's back again. For 4:35, she's Carol.

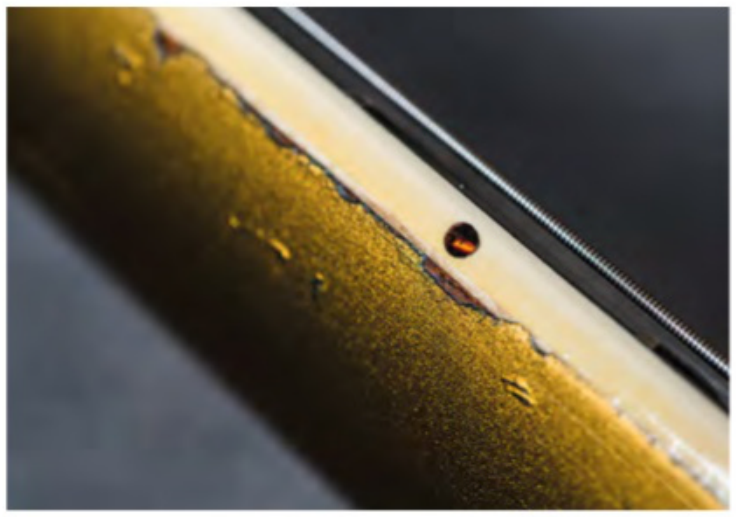
th•mann
MUSIC IS OUR PASSION

GUITAR SHOPPING IN LA

The City Of Angels has been at the centre of the music industry for decades, so it's no surprise that there are few better locations in which to head out on guitar safari. Let us be your guide…

WORDS MICHAEL JAMES ADAMS
PHOTOGRAPHY ELEANOR JANE

Travelling can be daunting, to say the least. All of the planning that goes into it, from flight and hotel reservations, where to eat, to figuring out what to do with your days, it seems that vacations can often feel like anything but. And on top of all of that, musicians will naturally want to know where to see the coolest stuff and the best deals. If this is the case, you're in luck! If you're traveling to sunny Los Angeles, we've done some of the legwork for you. Once you've visited the bright lights of Guitar Center Hollywood on Sunset Boulevard, here are four other must-see shops in the area…



NORMAN'S RARE GUITARS
TARZANA

Over the last 32 years, Norman's Rare Guitars has become something of a worldwide phenomenon thanks to its appearance in t-shirt form in *This Is Spinal Tap* and being name-checked in plenty of other films. Not limited to cinema, the shop has kept up with the changing trends of social media with its Guitar Of The Day posts on Instagram and YouTube, and continues to serve as a place of pilgrimage for movie stars, up-and-coming rockers, and guitar-minded folk across the globe.

Owner, proprietor, and namesake Norm Harris started buying up old guitars in the 1960s, long before the idea of the vintage market as we know it had solidified. An expert in all things guitar – you name it, he knows it – Norm put his extensive knowledge to use and stockpiled truckloads of instruments and banked on a boom down the road. Chances are you know his name, or at least the name of the shop, so it's safe to say his foresight paid off.

The shop offers all manner of instruments, from ultra-rare one-offs, tried and true vintage favourites, and even modern affairs. With a cursory glance at what hangs on the walls of its huge showroom, it's clear that the love of the guitar is alive and well in Norman's Rare Guitars. As we browse and peruse, our friend and salesman Todd Wisenbacker rolls out guitar after guitar while Norm gives us the inside scoop on each instrument.

First from the back room is an undeniably breathtaking 1955 Les Paul Goldtop… and back, and sides, and neck. That's right, the beautifully crazed gilded vision you see before you is in fact one of the rare all-gold models and a sight to behold in its totally original glory. Each crack in the finish reads like a line on the palm of your hand, each a story of the past and portent of things to come. Yellowed binding sets off the silky smooth Brazilian rosewood fretboard and unadorned cream plastics, while that famous golden-era craftsmanship ensures the guitar has a loud and resonant sound and near-infinite sustain.

Next up is a jaw-dropping 1951 Stromberg 400, which seems particularly exciting for Norm as he gives us a brief run-down of the brand's history. He explains: "The two boutique makers who made the top guitars for the top players were D'Angelico and Stromberg, and Stromberg was the last word for guitar players like Irving Ashby and Oscar Moore. And all of them were unique, you'll notice with Strombergs that the inlays are a little different. They were spec'd for the individual."

TOP An original 1955 Gibson Les Paul. Not just a Goldtop, this has the rare all-gold finish that includes the back and the neck

RIGHT Norman Harris, proud proprietor, guitar expert and collector extraordinaire

Its natural finish is still bright and clean, and with a body width of 19-inches, Norm notes it's "bigger than a Super 400." The guitar has a bold, round sound that seems loud enough to reach the cheap seats. The only non-original part on the Stromberg is the pickguard, which suffered the usual celluloid deterioration that you see with most plastics from the era. Thankfully, Norm's expert techs replaced the guard with a hand-cut replica, completing and preserving the look of such a stately guitar. Oh, and the handle on the back of the headstock? That's the strap button!

Moving on, Norm brings out something truly special. Now before us is a Mauer model 595 from the 1930s in all of its abalone-inlaid splendour, eliciting gasps from our team. It's an instrument we know next to nothing about, but we are glad to have Norm as our caretaker.

"The Larson Brothers were builders in the midwest in the 20s through the 1940s," he tells us. "They made guitars under a number of different names like Mauer, Euphonon, Prairie State, and Stahl depending on where it was sold. They didn't mass produce and they were all unique."

The intricate pearl inlay work framing the body, headstock, and ebony fingerboard is as exquisite as it is plentiful – so much so that it's easy to get lost on some of the finer details: the stars on the bridge, for example. And while it looks great, the sound simply must be heard to be believed: it is full, rich, and shockingly loud.

To be honest, after the last one we aren't sure that anything will impress us so much, but this penultimate guitar is surely a showstopper. This 1963 Fender Jaguar wears the exceedingly rare gold hardware option, which looks quite smart against the custom colour Candy Apple Red finish. Yes, it's 100 per cent original (it even has a gold truss rod nut) and available for purchase.

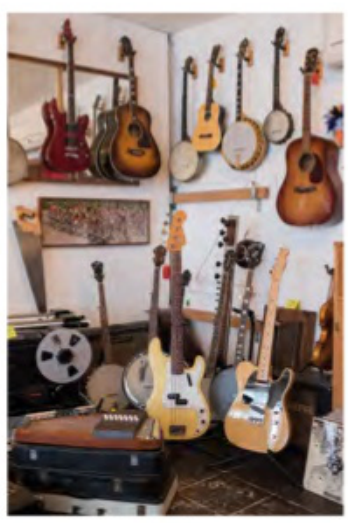
Lastly, we spend some time with a guitar owned by none other than the late Tom Petty, who was a personal friend and frequent customer of Norm's. The guitar, a 1964-65 Gibson SG Standard, was the instrument Tom used while touring with Bob Dylan in 1987, and is signed by Petty himself. Inside the case is a photo of Tom with Dylan and the SG, wearing the very top hat that Norm occasionally pops on as a customer pleaser. Incidentally, at the time of writing the two year anniversary of his passing has just ticked by, and the world surely hasn't been the same since.

On any given day at Norman's Rare Guitars, one can expect to see high-end guitars and the high-end clientele to go along with them. During our little interview and photo shoot, the store played host to a few noteworthy singer-songwriters. Sadly, we can't reveal their names here; don't think about the implications…

TOP A touch of stardust – a '64/'65 Gibson SG once owned by regular customer Tom Petty and signed by the late legend himself, plus a rare 1963 Jaguar in Candy Apple Red with gold hardware

BELOW A curvaceous and unique 1951 Stromberg 400 and a lavishly-inlaid Mauer 595 from the 1930s

OLD STYLE GUITAR SHOP
SILVER LAKE



Nestled on the border between the Silver Lake and East Hollywood neighbourhoods, Old Style is a different sort of destination shop: grassroots and unassuming, its proverbial tent pitched in a converted mid-century residence. Old Style eschews elitist swank and the too-cool-for-school attitude adopted by some personae in the guitar world, favouring a comfortable, down-home atmosphere and a laid back, welcoming staff.

The shop is highly regarded among guitar enthusiast types for its embrace of quirky, kitschy guitars of the 1960s. Any trip to the shop will likely yield the branding of Asian, European, and American origins as well as home-brewed builds that simply must be played to be believed. As the shop nears its 10th anniversary, owner Reuben Cox still seems mystified at the success of his shop.

Old Style's inception was the product of a cross-country move to Los Angeles from New York City. His wife was asked to open a West Coast office of the Beggars Group – home to Rough Trade, 4AD, Matador, and other record labels – and the idea just kind of came up.

"This was no long-simmering idea," Cox confesses. "I've never owned or worked in a shop, have negligible musical talent, and have never been in a band! It just came out of nowhere."

And so, the deed was done in an exceedingly DIY fashion: Cox simply found a space and opened without bank involvement or even a safety net. "If it crashed and burned, I could start knocking on the doors of LA art schools for work… I don't recommend anyone do it this way."

Regardless of its beginnings, Old Style has earned a loyal and steady customer base thanks to its inventory of "mainly used and vintage" guitars, in line with the sensibilities of its owner, who can often be found soldering wires at his workbench in pursuit of nursing instruments back to good health.

During our visit, treasures such as this old Harmony-made Stella parlour acoustic fitted with a modern dual-blade pickup in the soundhole and dual outputs for it and an additional piezo element. At first glance, it may appear to be a simple entry-level vintage instrument, but careful inspection reveals Reuben's signature tinkerer's brilliance. Between the art deco inlays and matching tailpiece lies an ingenious alteration: a rubber bridge. It's a sound being embraced by LA hotshots and songwriters who find inspiration in the utter lack of sustain and an

TOP A Harmony-made Stella parlour acoustic modded with a modern dual-blade pickup, a piezo and a rubber bridge. Owner Reuben Cox (pictured) also builds his own Old Style-branded guitars

BELOW A more traditional Gibson HG-00 from 1937 with a double pickguard

ATB GUITARS

– FORMERLY ATOYBOY GUITARS –

NEW SHOWROOM JUST OPENED!!

Come and visit us, by appointment, in our newly refurbished showroom in Regency Cheltenham at the heart of the Cotswolds

All our stock will be on display for trial, together with a cool range of vintage amps and some irresistible coffee.

WE BUY AND SELL VINTAGE GIBSON AND FENDER GUITARS FROM THE 50'S 60'S AND 70'S - THAT'S ALL WE DO, AS SIMPLE AS THAT!

Visit us at www.atbguitars.com for full details and quality photos of all items
Follow us on Facebook or Instagram for news of daily arrivals

– AT THE TIME OF WRITING SOME OF THE ITEMS WE HAVE IN STOCK INCLUDE: –

1957 Gibson ES-5 Switchmaster
1956 Gibson ES-5N Switchmaster Blonde
1959 Gibson ES-355 Mono Stoptail
1960 Gibson ES-345 TDSV Cherry PAF's
1962 Gibson ES-335 TD PAF PAT
1964 Gibson ES-345 TDVC
1956 Gibson ES-175D
1959 Gibson ES-175D Players
1967 Gibson ES-330L Burgundy

1934 Gibson Super 400

1957 Fender Stratocaster Mary Kaye
1959 Fender Stratocaster maple neck
1961 Fender Stratocaster Blonde
1962 Fender Stratocaster Fiesta Red
1963 Fender Stratocaster Olympic White
1969 Fender Stratocaster S/B
1973 Fender Stratocaster LPB
1982 Fender Stratocaster AVRI

1952 Fender Telecaster ex-Lenny Kravitz
1953 Fender Telecaster
1956 Fender Telecaster
1958 Fender Telecaster Custom Prototype CATALOGUE guitar!
1967 Fender Custom Telecaster Candy Apple Red
1968 Fender Telecaster Thinline
1969 Fender Telecaster Sonic Blue

1959 Fender Jazzmaster Blonde
1963 Fender Jaguar Blonde Gold
1966 Fender Jaguar Olympic White

1952 Gibson Les Paul Goldtop
1955 Gibson Les Paul Goldtop
1968 Gibson Les Paul Goldtop
1958 Gibson Les Paul Custom
1960 Gibson Les Paul Custom
1974 Gibson Les Paul Custom
1955 Gibson Les Paul Junior
1959 Gibson Les Paul Junior 3/4
1960 Gibson Les Paul TV Junior
1956 Gibson Les Paul TV Special
1962 Gibson Les Paul SG STD Ebony Block
1963 Gibson Les Paul SG STD
1963 Gibson Korina Flying V White

1966 Fender Jazz Bass Sonic Blue MINT
1953 Fender Precision Bass
1980 Musicman Bass MINT!

1963 Gretsch Tennessean
1972 Dick Knight Custom Twin Neck ex Jon Camp Renaissance
1967 Rickenbacker 360/12 Gold Parts

1964 Epiphone FT110 Frontier
1968 Martin 00-18C

2005 PRS Employees Model Santana 2
2016 PRS DGT Private Stock
2015 Gibson True Historic Ace Frehley
2016 Gibson True Historic R9 Tom Murphy

WE WILL PAY EXTREMELY GOOD MONEY FOR SIMILAR VINTAGE GUITARS.

A selection of recent sales »

1967 Gibson ES-335 TD Pelham Blue

1957 Gibson ES-5 Switchmaster

1952 Fender Telecaster Blackguard

1956 Gibson Les Paul Standard MINT

1969 Gibson Flying V

1964 Fender Stratocaster Olympic White

www.atbguitars.com atbguitars atbguitars @atbguitars
Email: info@atbguitars.com • Tel: 01242 697607 • Int: +44 1242 697607

ABOVE Here's Reuben's T-style 'Coodercaster' with a horsehoe pickup at the bridge, along with an offset electric with f-hole and Johnny Marr-style switching

exceedingly warm tone. Jeff Tweedy employs such a guitar on Wilco's latest record, *Ode To Joy*.

This is just one example of Old Style actually influencing the musical landscape of its city, something many shops just can't claim to have done. It's one thing to simply offer products, but quite another to peddle shared sound experiences to the outside world.

In addition to modified instruments, Old Style churns out builds of its own as well. These usually take the form of hollowbody electrics with bookmatched tops and "bandsaw-cut sides." Reuben's guitars often take some inspiration from tried and true shapes, but it's done with reverence and respect, not regurgitation. Take the lightly-bursted T-style/Coodercaster guitar pictured here, featuring a gold foil in the neck position and a horseshoe in the bridge.

"The Telecaster shape is such an airtight industrial design and I seem to return to that shape often," Reuben elaborates. Continuing the hollowbody theme are a blacked-out model with a Bigsby-like pointy cutaway, and a blonde Jaguar-style guitar with a Johnny Marr-style control scheme and a tasteful f-hole.

Old Style is also home to a number of rare, lesser-known gems from bygone eras. We spot a Magnatone Mark V, designed by Paul Bigsby – a perfect picture of elegance, lovingly worn and utterly charming in its stately split inlays and chrome accoutrements. Oh, and ever heard of a Gibson HG-00? Yeah, they've got one from 1937 and it's divine. Beautiful sunburst finish, comfortable parlour-like body, and dual pickguards.

Some shops may try to wow you with their golden-era Bursts and rock 'n' roll connections, but Old Style isn't so much shock and awe, it's about the feeling of connection to the greater good of music itself.

IMPERIAL VINTAGE BURBANK

ABOVE Imperial Vintage's 1967 Fender Antigua Coronado II and a 1960s triple-pickup Silvertone 1429, plus canny owner Shai Ashkenazi – "whenever there's a hot Muse situation, I put Mansons on the wall"

Just a hop, skip, and a jump away from "the 5" and Central Casting, if you happen to be looking for on-set work, the Burbank location of Imperial Vintage should be considered the perfect palette cleanser for those who tire easily of the big-box retail environment. It's a small but well curated shop with a no-nonsense atmosphere, the kind of place perfectly suited for those looking for real world opinions and experience and quality repairs.

Owner Shai Ashkenazi runs a fair and honest business here, where he buys and sells at a breakneck pace thanks for his unwavering commitment to matching customers with the right instrument. While we shadow him for a couple of hours, we see him tackle two customers' doubts, both with cash in hand, and in each encounter he speaks openly about how the instrument in question may not be right for them.

In one instance, it's a customer who calls herself "a beginner," yet her brother had told her not to bother with any guitar that cost less than $2,000. Shai suggests a guitar costing far less instead, reassuring her that such a large drop in the bucket shouldn't be a barrier for entry into the world of music.

"He told her to buy a Taylor. That's a great guitar, but she doesn't need that yet – she has so much to learn! So I told her, buy this instead, take it, learn to play it, and when you build yourself up I'll help, sincerely."

In another, it's a gentleman who seems keen on two 90s Stratocasters, but neither of them quite fit his needs. One, a Lace Sensor-equipped Clapton sig, feels great, but doesn't have the traditional Strat sound. The other, a limited edition Hendrix Strat with the reverse headstock, has the sound but not the same ultra-slick feel he likes. Shai agrees that he could sell him either one and make modifications, but maybe the better course of action is to track down something that ticks all the right boxes.

Both customers seem genuinely stunned that he's being so honest, and thank him profusely. In a day and age where we're constantly being told that our purchases can help shape our identity, his honesty is refreshing. And for Ashkenazi, slinging guitars is about more than just making a buck. When we ask about his motivations, "relationship" is on the tip of his tongue. Without a pause, he tells us, "We take care of people because we want them to come back. It's all about relationship."

With over 30 years experience in the industry, it makes perfect sense that Shai and co may have an

ABOVE A ’66 Epiphone Casino in great condition, a ’74 Tele with factory Bigsby and a refurbished 1930s Lyon & Healey parlour guitar

innate ability to understand a player’s needs. The shop walls are brimming with what Shai refers to as “bread and butter guitars,” consisting of mainly used Les Pauls, Stratocasters, as well as brand new selections from the Fender line. UK builder Manson also features prominently on the wall, which Ashkenazi jokes that he sells “seasonally,” usually coinciding with a Muse tour. “I like Muse. Whenever there’s a hot Muse situation, I put them on the wall.”

The first instrument we noticed when we walked into the shop was a gorgeous and largely unfaded 1967 Fender Antigua Coronado II. Brainchild of famed Rickenbacker designer Roger Rossmeisl, the Coronado represents Fender’s initial foray into hollowbody instruments, which also included the Rossmeisl-designed Montego Jazz guitar. While neither found an audience at the time, appreciation for the Coronado has grown considerably in recent years. This totally original example features that signature grey-to-cream finish with ‘Antigua’ proudly emblazoned on the pickguard, rare pearloid button Fender-Grover tuners, and the fantastic, optional Mustang-style vibrato.

Another beautiful example of a 1960s hollowbody underdog comes in the form of a sunburst Silvertone model 1429. The subtly flamed maple top and shaded sunburst finish makes for a striking combination, as does the unique triple on-off switching appointments on the model. A tortoiseshell headstock overlay, pickguard, and control plate contrasts nicely with the brown-to-yellow burst. This model features three rosewood spacer-mounted DeArmond Rowe Gold Foils with silver foil inserts, some of the best examples of that thrashy, trashy goodness that defines the foil pickup.

The Epiphone Casino is clearly a heavyweight in the hollowbody world, and this classic-looking example is a knock-out. This lovely ’66 Casino is in excellent condition with a bright and clean cherry sunburst finish. The chrome is clean, and the only changed part we can detect is the later bridge.

Rounding out the store’s impressive selection is a well-worn 1930s Lyon & Healy parlour acoustic, which has had a fresh neck reset as well as a complete refret. It’s one hell of a player, with a sombre voice and years of stories left to tell. Note the sunken lacquer and rope-style binding. There’s a great mix of instruments and ages at Imperial Vintage – also worth mentioning is a natural ’74 Fender Telecaster with original ‘F’ Bigsby.

TRUETONE MUSIC
SANTA MONICA

ABOVE Big, bold colours at Truetone include a Fano RB6 with P-90s, a gorgeous Gretsch White Penguin and a Fender Road Worn 50s Stratocaster

NEXT PAGE A seafoam-finish Jerry Jones Guitarlin

Should you be more interested in what's fresh on the market, downtown Santa Monica's Truetone Music will certainly scratch that particular itch. It's a one-stop shop for top brands such as Fender, Gretsch, Danelectro, Orange, Ernie Ball, Supro, Rickenbacker, and PRS. In addition, Truetone has a huge selection of pedals and offers in-house lessons and repairs. Inside, the retail space is huge with guitars lining every wall at least five rows up. To your left is the checkout counter, and behind that, the side of the shop where you'll find higher-end US brands like Fender Custom Shop and Gretsch. To your right from the front door, you'll find a wood-panelled section where most of the used and more affordable guitars hang, as well as bigger amplifiers of new and used varieties.

One of the first guitars to catch our eye is a shimmering Fano RB6 Standard in Candy Apple Red, a model that Fano refers to as "part British Invasion and part carve-top." The lovely metallic finish and hardware show off the company's 'medium distress' option, a tasteful layer of added ageing that lends a certain degree of complexity to the body's German-style carves. Two P-90s, hard tail, three-way toggle, volume, and tone; what more do you need?

As mentioned, Truetone deals in Custom Shop guitars, which includes a gorgeous Gretsch White Penguin. Jaded as we guitar players can be, there's still nothing quite so alluring as a gently faded white finish set against gleaming gold-sparkle drum-wrap binding. Rounding out the luxury package are Filter'Tron pickups, a Gretsch Bigsby, a Rocking Bar bridge – all in an aged gold finish.

But that's not to say that all you'll find at Truetone are high dollar commitments. On the contrary, there are plenty of great deals to be had, such as a black Fender Road Worn 50s Stratocaster. Factory aged and beautifully set up, this snappy little shredder remains a near-constant must buy. The Road Worn series featured an alder body with a relic'd nitrocellulose finish, Tex-Mex pickups, and a vintage-style maple neck with a 7.25-inch radius. If you were considering joining a Pink Floyd cover band, this would be the perfect place to start.

Truetone's vintage selection includes an exceptional example of the Res-O-Glas era, a circa 1964 Supro White Holiday. The one we played has its original vibrato unit (which works perfectly, we might add) as well as the 'Clear Tone' pickup with Deco adornments. The three-way preset tone circuit

is such a genius control scheme for the model, perfectly matched to the unique hollow sound of the fiberglass body. These guitars are such gems of the 1960s, it's always a pleasure to play one.

While not quite vintage, the caché of Jerry Jones' incredible guitars continues to rise. Jones was the Nashville-based maker of upmarket Danelectro-style guitars which were built to last and upgraded for stellar sound. They were always affordably-priced, but since shutting down in 2011, prices have risen steadily. One of Jones' stranger models, the Guitarlin boasts a 25.25-inch scale and 31 frets, offering three and a half octaves of fun. The dual lipstick pickups capture each note in incredible detail, with a loud and robust tone to match. And the eye-catching seafoam finish makes this one a true stunner.

No matter what you're into, the Greater Los Angeles area is sure to have it. Next time you're in town, give yourself an extra day for trekking around to a few of our favourite shops… G

1 Norman's Rare Guitars
18969 Ventura Blvd,
Tarzana, CA 91356

2 Old Style Guitar Shop
510 N Hoover St,
Los Angeles, CA 90004

3 Imperial Vintage
1118 W Magnolia Blvd,
Burbank, CA 91506

4 Truetone Music
714 Santa Monica Blvd,
Santa Monica, CA 90401

CODAMUSIC www.coda-music.com

...AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

The Carr Telstar blends the deep full control of 6L6s with the sinewy harmonic assertion of EL84s in a new and unique push pull recipe. You may have a 6L6 amp or an EL84 amp but not an amp that uses both types in harmony for a new pallet of expression.

The inspiration instrument–haunting cleans to creamy overdrive at the twist of a knob.

Channeling the years from early Fullerton 50s roundness thru proto 60s British bite and beyond.

The Carr Telstar

The Carr Telstar Amplifier available at Coda Music.

51a High Street, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 3AH t : 01438 350 815 e : stevenage@coda-music.co.uk
Acoustic Centre 27b Church Lane, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 3QW t: 01438 350815 e: acoustics@coda-music.com

Instant decision 9 months 0% finance
available on all new products over £300 on our website

THE POWER OF TWELVE

THE ORAL HISTORY OF THE RICKENBACKER 12-STRING

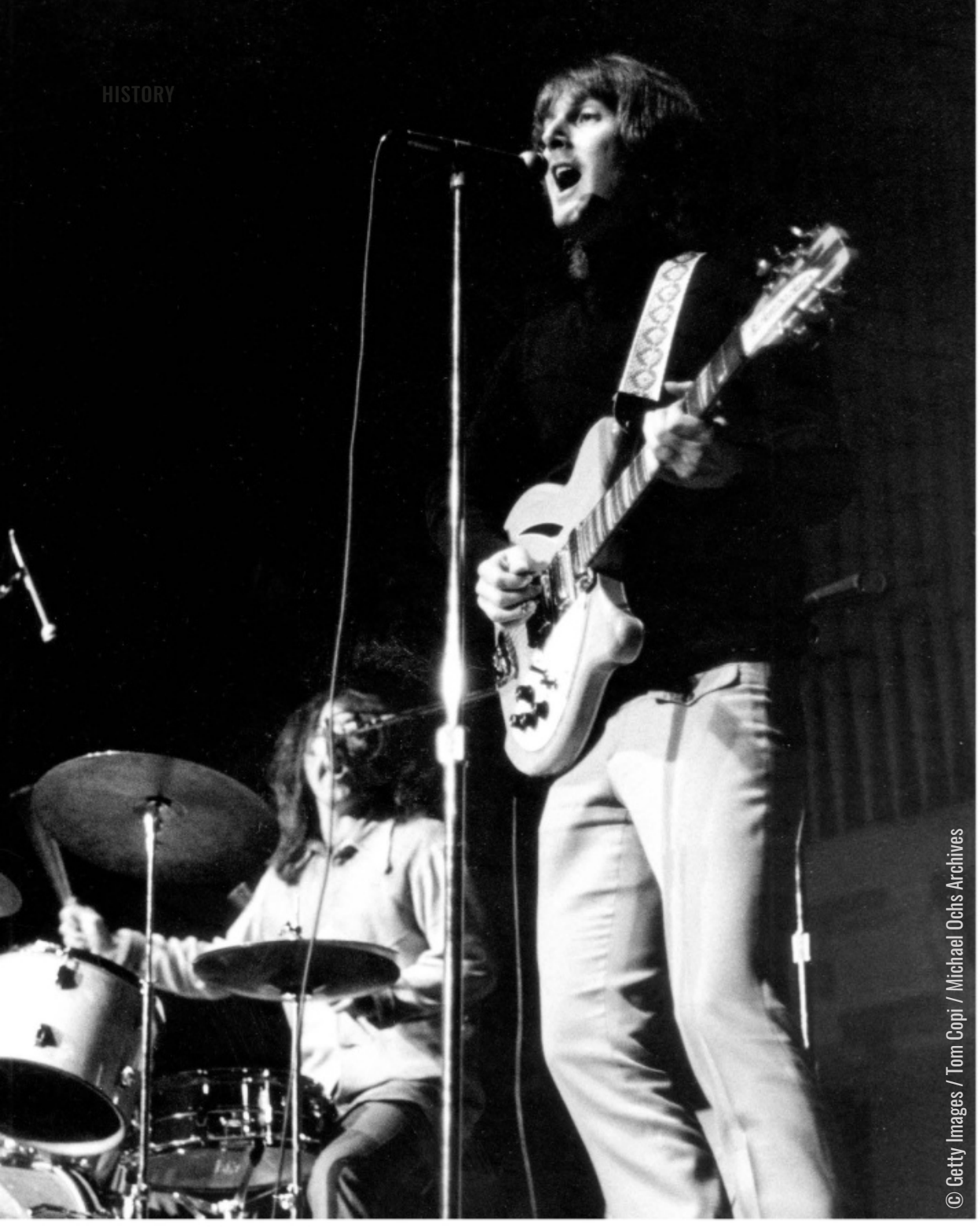
Rickenbacker wasn't the first company with an electric 12, but when its models were taken up by The Beatles, The Byrds, and many more, the brand became synonymous with the big, bold jangle that this instrument could produce…

WORDS TONY BACON

This oral history is about the early days of the Rickenbacker electric 12-string, a remarkable guitar with a newly popular sound that the company introduced in 1964. *Melody Maker* called it "the beat boys' secret weapon" as players inspired by the likes of The Beatles' George Harrison and The Byrds' Roger McGuinn lined up to add it to their guitar arsenal.

The voices here come from interviews I've conducted for my books about guitars. The people you'll hear from are: Suzi Arden, a showband singer, fiddle-player, and guitarist whose Suzi Arden Show was a regular on the Las Vegas circuit; Dick Burke, who worked at Rickenbacker from 1958 to 2004; Mike Campbell, guitarist in Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers, and more recently with Fleetwood Mac; Francis (F.C.) Hall, who ran the Rickenbacker

© Getty Images / Jeff Hochberg



© Getty Images / Tom Copi / Michael Ochs Archives

company from 1953 to 1984; John Hall, who took over the running of Rickenbacker from his father, Francis Hall, in 1984; Roger McGuinn, guitarist with The Byrds; and Mike Pender, guitarist with The Searchers.

A NEW ERA FOR RICKENBACKER

Francis [F.C.] Hall

"I acquired the Rickenbacker guitar business from Adolph Rickenbacker in 1953. They were selling basically to teaching studios, so they built a lot of student-model steel guitars. Then we started developing the other style of guitar, the Spanish electrics, and that started taking over. I thought there'd be more sales volume in that style.

"I hired some engineers to work on it, to design something that was different than what was being produced at that time. Roger Rossmeisl was one of them – Paul Barth, who was managing the plant, hired him. Barth was a very good fella and a good manager.

"I had a lot of input from musicians. I'd go out to Vegas and various places where they were playing, talk to them, find out what they wanted, have them try our equipment."

Don Randall

"Radio & Television Equipment Co [Radio-Tel] was owned by Francis Hall, and I was the general manager there. Leo Fender was making a little tiny steel guitar, and we were doing business with him at the time, so we started selling those at Radio-Tel. Leo and Francis really didn't get along. They just rubbed each other the wrong way…

"In 1953, we had a fellow selling for us in the South, Charlie Hayes. We formed that year the Fender Sales company, and the four of us became partners. I was the managing partner, plus Leo, Charlie Hayes, and Francis Hall.

"That went on for a little while, and the antagonism in the company was such that I felt like a referee. Charlie and I were doing one thing, and Leo and Francis another. In 1955, Charlie was killed in a head-on car accident near the Fender factory. That left Francis, Leo, and me in the company.

"Anyway, this animosity continued to grow, and Francis had bought the Rickenbacker company, so that sealed his fate there. We decided we couldn't have him in the company, made him a buy-or-sell offer, which he felt he couldn't handle, so we bought his interests. The company became Leo and myself, and it continued in that vein until we sold Fender to CBS in 1965."

ROGER ROSSMEISL & NEW-LOOK RICKS

John Hall

"When my dad bought Rickenbacker in 1953, it began the transition from a Hawaiian guitar company into a more mainstream Spanish guitar company. And without question Roger Rossmeisl was responsible for that. He was given certain parameters to hit. I can't tell you how many prototypes or whatever they were or what they even looked like, but Rossmeisl certainly came up with the body styles and the body shapes.

"He was brought in specifically by Paul Barth to do the design work. My dad designed the circuits, and I think there must have been somebody else involved in some of the mechanical aspects – I can't quite picture Roger designing the bridge assemblies. Maybe Barth did that.

"I thought Roger was a very warm and interesting sort of guy. He was the only person I knew at that time who drove a sports car – he'd often take me round the block in his sports car, top down, a lot of fun. Come Christmas, I could guarantee that Rossmeisl's gift was always the best, it would be educational, always interesting.

"He seemed like a fairly decent family man at that time, he had a very young son. I was young, and we'd get together socially, [myself] Roger and his son. He seemed, at least in the factory, a little eccentric perhaps in that he pretty well liked to be hands-on and do his own thing, and be left alone to do his own thing.

"A lot of little stylistic elements that Roger brought with him from his father, and his grandfather, are still with Rickenbacker today. In particular, the way that the tops are carved, not only the German carve as on the 381 series, but the carving at the tailpiece, which is quite unique to Rickenbacker, and the idea that you're essentially making a guitar from the front. The

soundhole shape is very northern German, and the fingerboard inlays – the shark's tooth or whatever you want to call 'em – are very definitely Roger.

"Roger really liked to work alone, he was a real loner, and he wanted to do everything himself, and that just didn't work well in a production environment. So all his assistants had been hired that he was supposed to train and to delegate to do the different jobs.

"As I recall there were 10, and the factory manager was railing that nine of them weren't worth a damn, or were creating problems, whatever – and Semie Moseley [later of Mosrite] was one of those nine [laughs]. The tenth was Dick Burke, who the factory manager had written up very favourably."

ELECTRIC 12-STRINGS – PRE-RICKENBACKER

Stratosphere c.1955 catalogue, Twin model – the first electric 12-string guitar. The catalogue reads...

"Excitingly new! Astonishingly different! The guitar of tomorrow… today! The only twin-necked standard guitar on the market today: one six-string neck and one 12-string neck. An almost unlimited field of different tunings for the 12-string neck. Toggle switch for cutting in one neck at a time or both. Allows the standard guitar player to play double-string lead as fast as he would ordinarily play single string-lead. Melodies played on the 12-string neck sound like multiple recording.

"Played and recommended by Jimmy Bryant, West Coast radio, television, and Capitol recording artist. $330."

Gibson 1958 catalogue, Double-12 model

"A completely new and exciting instrument… the Double-12 combines the conventional six-string guitar neck with a 12-string neck – six strings double-strung which can be tuned either in thirds or an octave apart for reinforced resonance and unusual tone effects. Custom-built to order only. $475."

Danelectro c.1963 catalogue, Bellzouki model

"These 12-string instruments are designed by Danelectro from original concepts of Vincent Bell. They evoke the mysterious charm and flavor of remote times and places, yet are easily played using familiar guitar technique. Single pickup Model 7010 $120. Double pickup Model 7020, $210."

DEVELOPING THE RICKENBACKER 12

Dick Burke

"I started at Rickenbacker in March 1958, reporting to Roger Rossmeisl and to Ward Deaton, who was the manager then. Roger was likeable – I worked with him for about four years – and he was responsible for a lot of the designs Rickenbacker still has today. If Francis Hall wanted something, Roger would put it on paper, a small sketch of it, and try and come up with something.

"We brought in our 12-string somewhere around 1964. Mr Hall wanted a 12-string, but he wanted the head short, a compact head – he didn't want six keys and another six keys. He asked – could we come up with a configuration to make it not much bigger than a regulation six-string head? So I drilled around, and I came up with what we've got today.

PREVIOUS The Beatles appearing on ITV's *Ready Steady Go!* on 20 March, 1964

OPPOSITE LEFT The Byrds' Roger McGuinn plays live with his customised Mapleglo Rickenbacker 360/12 and (below) his 370/12 signature model, launched in 1988

ABOVE The more angular Rickenbacker 330/12. The 330 models always sold better than the 360s

© Getty Images / Pete Still

TOP The Heartbreakers' Mike Campbell got his solidbody 620/12 for just $120

ABOVE The Rickenbacker 381/V69 12 string with 'charactered' body and chequerboard binding

"I was head of the woodshop at that time, and we worked it different ways. We thought about putting the rout all the way through, in fact I think I made a couple with the rout all the way through, like a classical. I think it looked better without it. We ended up with a rout about an eighth of an inch in. If you can see through it… I don't know, it doesn't look as good. But I'm not a musician. If you wanted a short head, you had to come in from the side some way, you had to mount them a different way. So then we came up with one with a back on it. It didn't take very long to come up with it, you know?"

PROTOTYPE 1 – THE SUZI ARDEN SHOW

Suzi Arden

"Mr Hall brought me the 12-string [in 1963], to the show I worked in Las Vegas. It was the first one, his 'model'. He always brought me new things he was doing. He said to try this new 12-string out and see how you like it. I did, and I wouldn't let him take it back [laughs].

"I was playing a Martin electric six-string at the time, but the Rickenbacker was so sweet, sounded so good, and it added to my show so much. It made a sharp, beautiful sound—there's nothing I think sounds as beautiful as a Rickenbacker 12. I could play all the chords on it real easy, and being electric, also, I loved it. I used the 12-string always from that point on, for the next twenty-something years."

PROTOTYPE 2 – A HARD DAY'S NIGHT

Roy Morris of Rose-Morris, letter to Francis Hall at Rickenbacker, December 1963

"We think it would be an excellent idea if you, as the manufacturer of Rickenbacker Guitars, were to contact The Beatles' manager and offer them a certain amount of American publicity on their forthcoming visit to the States. If you address your letter to Mr Brian Epstein, Nems Enterprises, 24 Moorfield, Liverpool 2, England, you will reach their manager, who is, I believe, a very charming fellow. It is impossible to exaggerate [The Beatles'] influence at the present moment in this country. We will be getting in touch with him eventually but an initial letter from you could be very important for us all." [Rose-Morris became Rickenbacker's UK distributor in 1964.]

Francis Hall

"When I heard The Beatles were coming to the United States, I called Brian Epstein and made a date with them in New York for their first appearance in the States, when they were on *The Ed Sullivan Show*.

"They came over to our suite, except for George Harrison who was ill that day, and we showed them the new 12-string we'd just developed [a '63 prototype 360/12]. John Lennon wanted to know if he could take it back and show it to George. He asked me if I would go with them back to their suite, so we carried it across the park there in New York.

"George was playing it, and the telephone rang. John went to answer it in another room and he came back pretty soon, and he said some radio station, I forget which, wanted to talk to George Harrison, because they'd heard he was ill. I heard him tell them that the doctor told him he was to stay in bed, except for their programme that evening.

"Pretty soon I heard him telling about the instrument that John had brought over for him to look at. They said do you like that instrument? And he said, 'I sure do.' They said, 'Well, if we buy it for you, will you play it?' And he said yeah [laughs]. To shorten the story, he took it back to London, and they made *A Hard Day's Night* with it.

"Soon, there were musicians who wanted to make the same sound as The Beatles, so they started purchasing them too. I'm sure it helped increase our sales. I don't think it was The Beatles entirely – I'm sure some of it was – but our business improved in the middle 60s on account of this."

John Hall

"Of course, The Beatles had a very positive effect on the company. They gave the company a kind of visibility and unpaid-for advertising that we couldn't possibly have garnered any other way. Astounding. To have one of The Beatles using the product [Lennon's 325], then to have another to use it [Harrison's 360/12] for a great portion, and on some of their most popular movies, this kind of thing was incredible. And then later on to get three out of three [McCartney's 4001S] was just staggering."

PROTOTYPE 3 – DAMN THE TORPEDOES

Mike Campbell

"I was in California, working on the first Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers album, and we didn't have an electric 12-string in the band. I really wanted one,

either a George Harrison type or a Roger McGuinn type, the large body. *Recycler* was like a precursor to eBay – a magazine where people could advertise stuff for sale. You'd call up the advertiser and go over to their house and make a deal.

"I looked in the *Recycler* one day, around 1975, and there was an ad for a Rickenbacker 12-string at $200. I took the two-hour drive out to Anaheim, real excited. The guy brought it out, and it's actually the guitar you see on the cover of *Damn The Torpedoes*, that small solidbody Rickenbacker [a '63 prototype 620/12]. When he opened it up my heart sank. This is the little one, and I wanted the big one! I said this is not really what I want.

"I gave it a play and offered the guy $120. And walked out with it. Years later, we made a couple of trips to the Rickenbacker factory, and they said, 'Do you realise that this guitar was the next one off the assembly line after George's?' By some stroke of luck, I had a really vintage one that was right in the same ilk as his, even though it was small-body.

"And on tour, that was our 12-string for quite a while. It's a great little guitar. But I don't take it on the road now, because it's so valuable. I've been offered quite a lot of money for it, beyond what I paid for it, which is kind of funny. Yes, a bit more than $120."

INTO PRODUCTION

Rickenbacker 60s ad, 360/12 model

"Now, A New Dimension In Sound! Twelve Strings. Take a close look at the brilliant new 12-string Rickenbacker. Fresh in concept, modern in design, this is the instrument professionals are finding so exciting! Its spacious, clean sound is totally different – a new triumph in engineering and structural craftsmanship. Hold this new guitar and strum a little – see how much smoother and faster you play. The Rickenbacker 12-string is now available coast to coast. $550."

IN THE JINGLE JANGLE MORNING

Roger McGuinn

"When The Byrds were getting together, I played a Gibson 12-string acoustic guitar that Bobby Darin had given me after he accidentally destroyed the one I was using to back him up in his stage show. The Byrds were heavily influenced by The Beatles, and I started using a magnetic pickup in my Gibson to approximate The Beatles' sound, but it wasn't quite the same one we were hearing on their records.

"One night, we all went down to the Pix Theatre in Hollywood to see *A Hard Day's Night*. We carefully noted the brands and models of their instruments. John had a little black 325 Rickenbacker, Paul had a Hofner bass, Ringo played Ludwig drums, and George had a Gretsch six-string and a Rickenbacker that looked like a six-string – until he turned sideways. The camera revealed another six strings hidden in the back. I knew right then the secret of their wonderful guitar sound. It was a Rickenbacker 12-string!

"We went down to the local music shop and bought a Rickenbacker 360/12, along with a Gretsch six-string and a set of Ludwig drums. The new instruments gave us a sense of confidence. The Rickenbacker with the aid of electronic compression in the studio gave us the distinctive jingle-jangle sound that we would later be known for."

© Getty Images / Slaven Vlasic

ANOTHER LIVERPUDLIAN RICK 12

Mike Pender

"*Needles And Pins* was the single that put The Searchers on the world stage and really made us a household name, and following that I think came *Don't Throw Your Love Away* – and then *Someday We're Gonna Love Again*, which didn't do as well.

"Drummer Chris Curtis and I wondered what we were going to do. We were a little bit concerned, so we said we have to get a great song for the next one. And we found Jackie DeShannon's *When You Walk In The Room*. But it was pretty light. I said to Chris, that riff there, it starts and it's in between the first couple of lines. That's really got to stand out, it's got to be important. It's not going to sound good on a six-string, no matter if we double-track it or whatever.

"So, we're in the dressing room at *Top Of The Pops*, had the telly on, and all the songs from last week's chart are playing. The Beatles come on, it's *A Hard Day's Night*, and there's Harrison with this amazing guitar. I'd seen Rickenbackers before, but I said to Chris, listen to that – that's the sound we want for *When You Walk In The Room*. The rest is history.

"When we got back to Liverpool, I went into Crane's music store and said, can you order me a Rickenbacker 12-string? We knew the upcoming recording date for *When You Walk In The Room* – and we got it. That became one of the most recognisable riffs on a 12-string, especially in the 60s." G

TOP Mike Pender of The Searchers with a 620/12: "*When You Walk In The Room* is one of the most recognisable riffs on a 12-string"

ABOVE Rickenbacker's first electric 12-string from 1963

ASK THE AMP TECH

In the latest instalment of his amp-advice column, Rift mainman Chris Fantana deals with the hot topic of bottle swapping…

Have a burning question about your amp, or worse still, a burning amp? Email us at editors@guitar.com

Hi Chris. I've read that plugging 6L6 valves into a 6V6-powered circuit can offer more headroom and a less compressed response. Is this safe to do, or is it something that's circuit specific? And can you ever go the other way to get earlier breakup?
DAN, COVENTRY

This is becoming quite a common question in my inbox, so let's begin at the beginning…

Following the successful introduction of the 6L6 in July 1936, RCA engineers quickly realised that a downscaled version could be developed to replace the inefficient and comparatively high-distortion 6F6 model, usually found in both tabletop and car radios. A few months later, the 6V6 beam-tetrode was introduced. It ticked all of the boxes as it required less power to switch on, generated less distortion, operated at higher voltages, and crucially yielded a higher output.

The design of the 6V6 evolved over the coming years, eventually ending up as the 6V6GT variant most commonly seen today. Whilst usually seen in single-ended applications, when two were configured in push-pull the designer could easily achieve a 14-watt output at less than four per cent distortion – perfect for student/teacher guitar amplifiers, larger radios, and even small PA systems.

The 6V6 has become an industry-standard in USA guitar amplification, found in many Fender models from the late 40s right through to present day. With a wide range of operating conditions, Leo and his team configured a pair of 6V6s to run anywhere from 10 watts in the 5F11 Tweed Tremolux right up to a massive 22 watts in the Blackface Deluxe Reverb – eight watts more than the manufacturers intended! Robust, great-sounding, versatile and cheap, the 6V6 has been a designer's go-to output valve for good reason.

So if they're that good, why change to 6L6s? In recent years it has become quite popular for designers of low-powered, cathode-biased 6V6 amplifiers to over-engineer their circuits, allowing the end-user to plug-and-play 6L6s for a change of tone and response without a massive increase of output power. 6L6s generally offer a bolder, tighter feel with a smoother midrange and glassier top, whereas a 6V6 tends to have a little more midrange bite and spongier lows.

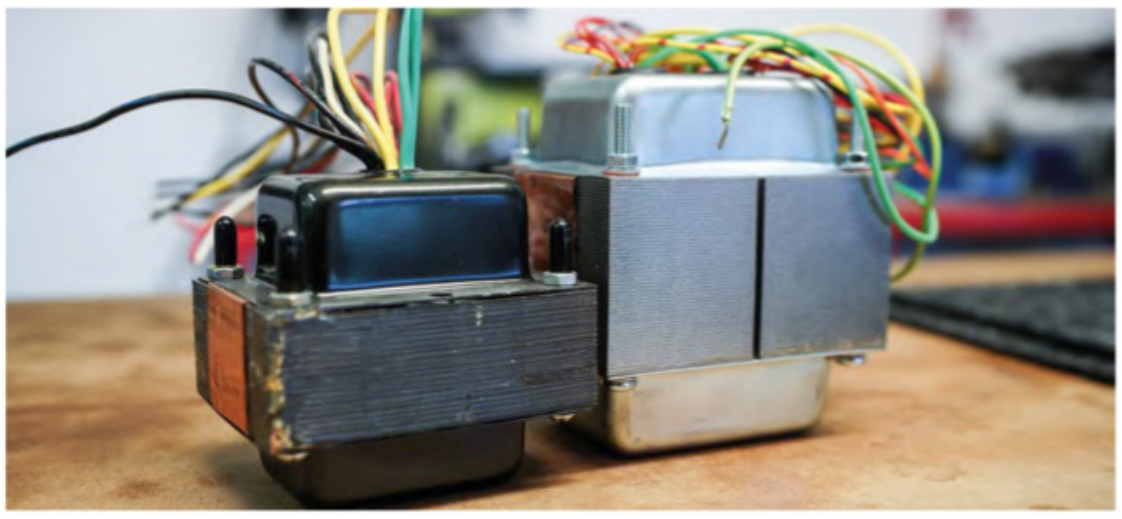
Running a pair of 6L6s at 6V6 voltages and impedance also gives a slight increase in perceived power and headroom, something that may or may not be a benefit to you. The option is a great one to have and can lead you down a few interesting paths of tonal exploration.

Can all 6V6s amplifiers run 6L6s? Without wanting to oversimplify things, you should imagine that two 6V6s take up the same electrical 'space' as one 6L6. This means that swapping 6L6s into your 6V6-powered amp would, therefore, require twice the amount of juice from your power transformer.

Unless the manufacturer of your amplifier specifically says that you *can* swap in 6L6s, it's always best to assume that you cannot. The risks of doing so are vast, including permanent damage to your power transformer and other associated components. Of course, it's possible to modify your amplifier so it can run 6L6s, but this will cost a few pennies.

Can you go the other way and have my 6L6 amplifier run 6V6s? Again, this will be circuit-specific and will most likely require a few tweaks internally to allow the safe running of 6V6s. The risk here is that a circuit optimised for 6L6s will quite quickly burn through your 6V6s if you're not careful, at the very minimum the B+ and bias voltages should be checked to ensure safe operating conditions.

Visit riftamps.com to find out more about Rift's range of British-built, handwired valve amplifiers



BELOW Not all amps designed for 6V6 valves can run 6L6s – replacement may cause damage to other components, such as the transformer

19 58

PLAYED BY THE BEST FOR OVER 60 YEARS

ELECTRIC ACOUSTIC BASS

20 20

MICHAEL AMOTT

MAS11 ELECTRIC

ROTOSOUND

WORLD FAMOUS MUSIC STRINGS

WWW.ROTOSOUND.COM

PHOTO: TINA KORHONEN

Relish Guitars' Silvan Kueng: "We aimed big from the start"

INDUSTRY INSIDER

RELISH GUITARS

INTERVIEW JOSH GARDNER

The Swiss boutique guitar brand is known far and wide for its defiantly modernist instruments and innovative engineering under the hood. We meet co-founder and CEO Silvan Kueng to find out how this incredibly individual brand got to where it is today…

How did you get into guitar in the first place?
"Like most guitarists, the rock 'n' roll heroes of the 50s and 60s made me want to pick up a guitar as a boy. And they still do today!"

When did you first start building or tinkering with guitars?
"Around eight years ago, my old business partner approached me, asking me to teach him how to play the guitar. In return, he showed me how to build a guitar. And things started rolling…"

When was the moment you realised you had a viable business on your hands?
"In very early stages we realised that the guitar market was ready for some real innovation in guitar building. A turning point was when legendary Vai/Zappa/Malmsteen guitar tech Thomas Nordegg became a big supporter and started calling us 'the Rolex within the guitar area'. He still supports us today."

How did you initially get the business off the ground?
"We aimed big from the start, so we tried to get all the help we could in order to get the business up and running long-term. We launched a successful crowdfunding campaign, managed to get support from various start-up programs and finally got investors on board that believed in our vision."

At what point did you feel like you 'nailed' your branding?
"Relish stands for the fullest and purest enjoyment and admiration in playing. And that's the passion behind our adventure. Playing our own instruments and relishing seeing them in the hands of other guitarists. We have so many people writing to us, super excited that somebody is bringing new features and innovation to the electric guitar. Seeing all these positive reactions from the guitarist community and our customers makes us feel like we nailed it."

What's your proudest moment as a maker to date?
"When Phil Campbell of Motörhead started playing our instruments on stage. I mean, Motörhead – the epitome of rock 'n' roll!"

How did you come up with your unique approach to guitar design?
"From the very beginning, the idea was to build a guitar body with an aluminium centre frame and wood on both sides. Similar to a piano construction, this allows the centre frame to carry on the strings' vibrations freely, boosting the sustain to new dimensions. This construction gave us access to the guitars' interior from the back. Which meant we could install pickups from the inside.

"Then it dawned on us that by not having to remove strings and pickguards, we had the opportunity to make pickups instantly swappable from the back. So we spent long days and nights developing a magnetic

Relish's aluminium frame design allows pickups to be loaded from the rear

The Relish branding has been strong and classy from the beginning

"IT DAWNED ON US THAT BY NOT HAVING TO REMOVE STRINGS AND PICKGUARDS, WE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE PICKUPS INSTANTLY SWAPPABLE FROM THE BACK"

swapping system with pre-soldered connecting points and pickup mounting frames. This system has been a standard in all Relish guitars since."|

What do you think are the biggest challenges and opportunities for the guitar industry in 2020?

"The big guitar heroes that shaped the image of the electric guitar are slowly vanishing and handmade music has become secondary over the past decade. The guitar industry has been very immobile and kept clinging onto concepts of bygone times. But times have changed, guitar players have become globally connected and want to explore new ground, new sound and new possibilities. And this is a huge opportunity for forward-thinking guitar builders to bring new concepts to niche markets globally."

What's next for Relish?

"Our patented instant pickup-swapping system has proven to be an incredible asset to modern guitar players. We're planning on expanding customization options for our Mary and Jane models and expanding the range of swap-ready available pickups.

"And at the same time, we want to make our groundbreaking instant pickup swapping innovation more affordable for guitar players on a tighter budget. There's going to be quite a big announcement very soon." G

For more information, visit relish.swiss

SHOP TALK

BOB BRADSHAW
TOURING RIG MAKER TO THE STARS

WORDS DAVE HUNTER

Bob Bradshaw became synonymous with switching systems when racks took over the guitar world in the late 1980s, but this pioneer in pro gear also remembers when the pedalboard was in its infancy…

For many guitarists who might like to think of themselves in, erm, slightly hipper terms, the image of the rack full of effects processors, high-gain preamps and megawatt power amps is inextricably tied to the pointy guitars, spandex slacks and bouffant hair of the commercial-metal bands of the 80s and early 90s.

The truth is, far more artists than those of the strut and stride brigade were turning to such touring systems back when the rack promised to be the way forward. But in fact pro-rig pioneer Bob Bradshaw got into the game way before rack-mounted guitar effects were even a thing, and his craft has always been about finding ways to make guitarists' stage systems work for them, using their preferred gear throughout the chain, rather than imposing any particular format upon his clients.

And if that pursuit has spanned one trend after another over the past four decades, it's interesting to note how much of Bradshaw's work has come full circle over that time. As he puts it: "Actually, it's funny: what I do these days, I had those same concepts almost 40 years ago."

GOIN' TO CALIFORNIA

Bradshaw moved to southern California in 1978 after graduating from electronics school in Atlanta,

Georgia. After serving out his time with the company that had brought him west, Hughes Aircraft, he segued into his love of audio electronics in 1979 and took a job as a bench technician at Music Service Center in Santa Monica.

Although effects pedals were already common fare in the guitar world, the pedal*board* was the newfangled way of merging a collection of more than two or three into a seamless stage accessory, but most practitioners of the art of creating the things were navigating uncharted waters.

"In the back of the repair shop," he recalls, "was a guy who did the keyboard work, for Fender Rhodes and all these other keyboards. And then there was a synth guy, who was like the brainiac of the operation, because he was working on Moogs and early ARP synths and Yamaha synths. Oh my god, these guys were brilliant! So the guy in the back – long story short – would get in pedalboards and he would work on them, which were very crude at the time.

"Paul Rivera was the king of pedalboards before I started, and sometimes his stuff would come in, and I'd see what he'd done. And he'd modify the pedals, put DIN jacks on, to carry power, or LEDs – a lot of the pedals at the time didn't have LEDs on them.

"So I was looking at this stuff, and at the same time I had these articles from Craig Anderton about remote-switching and stuff. It was somewhat crude switching using CMOS chips, and they were really low-headroom because they were logic chips; they could pass an analogue signal, but were very limited-headroom, and that's what Craig had spec'd out.

"So I thought, 'There's got to be a better way to do this.' I took that and started developing analogue switches based on discrete FETs and stuff, which made a huge improvement in their sound."

BUILDING NEW BOARDS

Having gained his foundation at Music Service Center, Bradshaw founded his own outfit, Custom Audio Electronics, which rapidly became one of the world's few genuine specialists in creating bespoke touring rigs. Essentially, his business involved making what were literally 'multiple effects units' out of guitarists' collections of discrete effects pedals and the occasional Echoplex and the like – long before anyone had dreamed up the all-in-one multi-FX products of the future – and helping them play nice together in the process. That meant devising not only clever switching systems, but rectifying input and output impedances and level and gain mismatches, creating power supplies, and so forth.

This specialisation soon found Bradshaw touring the world with big-name artists: Olivia Newton-John in '82, Joni Mitchell in '83, Toto in '85 and over the years, he's either built rigs for, or toured with, Michael Landau, Steve Lukather, Steve Stevens, Edward Van Halen, The Edge, Warren Haynes, Billie Joe Armstrong, Trey Anastasio, J Mascis, Kirk Hammett, Marty Friedman, Michael Schenker, Mick Mars, Prince, Peter Frampton, Nikki Sixx, Tom DeLonge, Yngwie Malmsteen, Vivian Campbell… and the list goes on, and on and on.

Yet because he was working in the environs of Los Angeles, the high-end outboard of the city's big studio scene would soon creep into the pedal-based venture – and things would change dramatically.

RACK IT UP

"I'm based in Los Angeles," says Bradshaw, "and what is in Los Angeles? Studios! So I was working for studio guys primarily, in the beginning. They'd come in and say, 'I want to use this Eventide Harmonizer…' It was meant for studio use, and the early H910 Harmonizers or the H949s and stuff, they were 100 per cent wet, there wasn't any control for mixing direct sound with those things. They were made to be used in a mix buss, so there was no dry signal passing through them.

"And keep in mind, in the beginning, all of the effects chains were right into the front end of the amp and there was no such thing as preamps or effects loops, none of that stuff, when I started. I had to build what I called a Harmonizer interface, which gave you level controls and mix controls, so that you could blend in how much of the effect you wanted."

Bradshaw's first major client was Buzz Feiten, for whom he adapted 19-inch hi-fi cabinets to carry the rack units and switching system, with discrete pedals mounted on top, before portable, guitarist-friendly rack cases were even available. After that, he also started working with Michael Landau and a host of other major studio names, which was when it came time to crest the next major tone summit.

The bigger challenge shaping up for Bradshaw and CAE wasn't even that of how to make these studio-intended units function in a guitar rig, but how to get the full sound of a guitar amp into the front end of the studio outboard gear, rather than vice-versa.

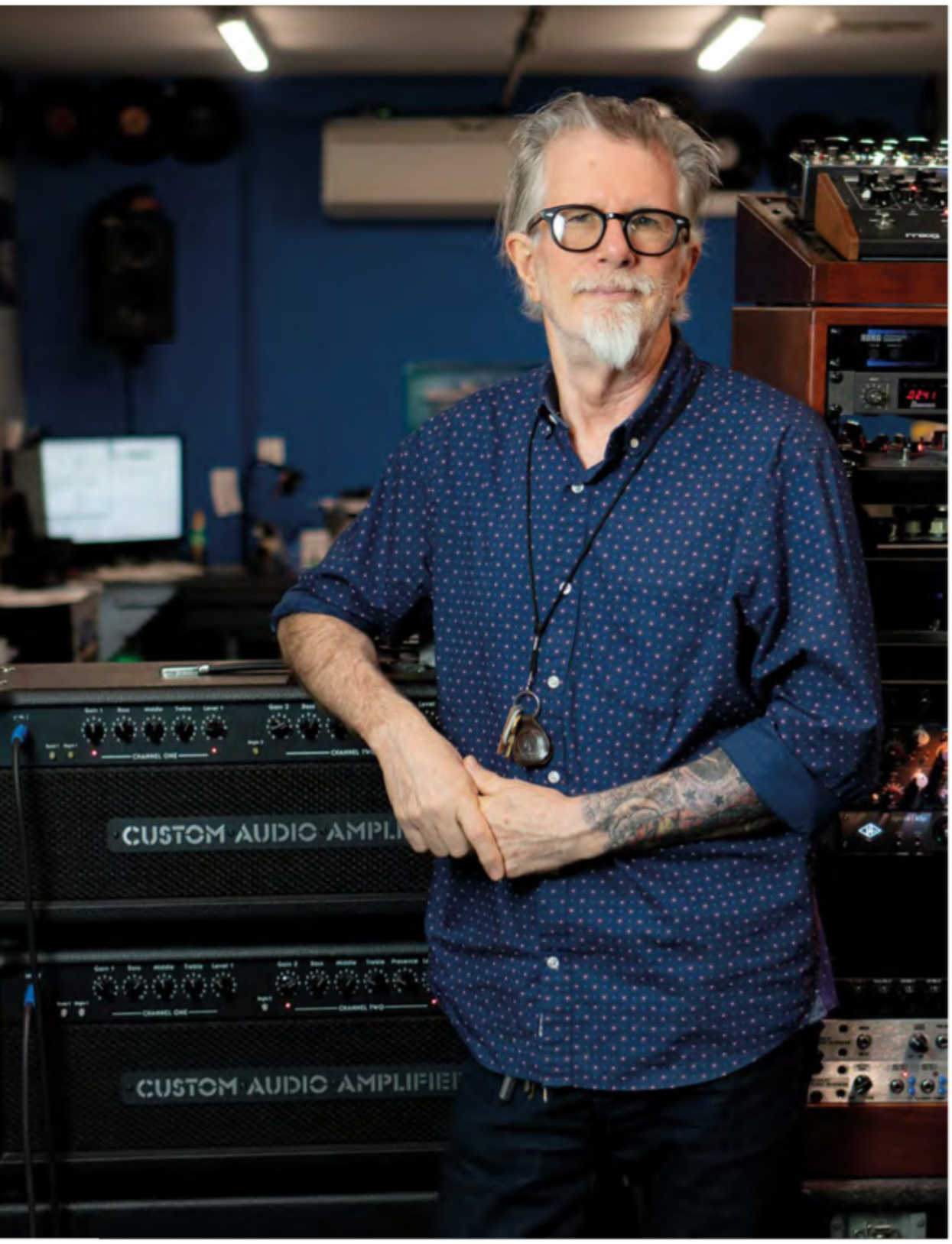
It's a conundrum with which countless guitarists still wrestle today – employing buffered effects loops, post-amp re-amping or attenuating boxes like the Fryette Power Station or Universal Audio OX Box, or other wet-dry solutions in the process – but when Bradshaw first tackled the issue, it was very much uncharted territory.

THE REACTIVE LOAD

"Even before I hooked up with Steve Lukather and Eddie Van Halen and people like that," Bradshaw recalls, "Mike Landau and I developed a lot of innovative stuff that is ubiquitous today. It's crazy the stuff we came up with! But before that, it was always effects hitting the front end of the amp.

"So, what happens? When you've got a high-gain amp and an echo, the echo repeats don't hit the front

In the 80s, Bob built rigs for the likes of Steve Lukather and Kirk Hammett. Now, The Edge and Deftones' Steph Carpenter are among his many clients



Bob Bradshaw founded his own company, Custom Audio Electronics, for his range of solutions and systems. He later partnered with John Suhr to form Custom Audio Amplifiers

end of the amp as hard, so the echo repeats die off sounding thinner than the initial note. So, we were like, '*W-w-what?* Why? What's going on here?'

"So we tried using an amp as a preamp and then put the effects after it, so that means we've got to pad down an amp signal – and I wanted to use the whole sound of the amp, too, because I wanted it to be just like they would do in the studio, where they would mic up an amplifier and that mic signal would go to the outboard gear in the control room, and then that would get processed. And you'd hear thick effects. Like if you used flanging or anything like that in the studio, they were flanging the *entire amp* sound, not the *guitar* sound."

The solution that Bradshaw and Landau devised was to use a large load resistor after the amp's speaker output, and to tap a line-level signal from that which would be fed into the effects, then re-amped into any conventional power amp. Voila! The thickness of a studio-processed guitar amp was back, with the full effect of the processing unit applied to it.

While the technique worked for the high-gain Mesa/Boogie amps that were popular at the time, though, Bradshaw and Landau found it was less successful coupled to the back end of a Marshall or the like. "We noticed, 'Marshalls sound thinner or compressed or something when we've got this load resistor on,'" Bradshaw recalls. "What's going on?"

"Then one day I put a speaker on the damn thing and hid the speaker so we didn't hear it, and listened to that, and it was like, '*There* it is!' We'd been missing out the entire time, because the amps need to see a reactive load, you know? You need to see some push-back from the coil of the speakers and that created life in the amplifier. Now the amp's breathing properly. But now we're lugging around these little boxes with speakers in them, rumbling off in the corner!"

THE BIRTH OF THE RACK PREAMP

The system was working, and the tone was mighty – but it was a lot to lug around, even for touring pros with a parade of roadies at their bidding. Touring with Steve Lukather, for example, Bradshaw tells us – which he did fairly steadily from 1985 to '92 – meant carting three amps, one for each core sound: a Soldano SLO-100 for leads, a modified Marshall for crunch and a long-box Mesa/Boogie for cleans.

"So this is a big-ass case that you're touring around with!" he declares. "And built into this case there's these load boxes, too, that are rumbling away next to the amplifiers, 12-inch speakers in a box that's sealed up, to act as the load. We weren't going to compromise.

"So I go, 'Man, there's got to be a way to cut this down. These amps are being used as preamps. What if we take the preamp stages of these things and put it down to a two-rack-space box with three channels in it, one clean, one crunch, and one solo?'

"I commissioned Mike Soldano and gave him one of my switching-system chassis to put it in… Three independent channels, gain, bass, middle, treble, and master on each channel, switchable from my switching system into one output that went through the effects."

The legendary Soldano X88R tube preamp was born. "I didn't even tell Lukather about this," Bradshaw recalls. "I did it on my own… He was blown away, man!"

A few years after having encouraged Mike Soldano to run with the idea on a production level, a combination of his desire to improve upon the template and the paltry margins he was getting on installing the X88R into his own systems ("he sold those things for $1,800, and he sold them to me for $1,700 a pop – and it was my idea!") led Bradshaw to hook up with New York-based guitar and amp tech John Suhr, who had modified one of Bradshaw's own Marshalls to achieve some stunning sonic tricks.

Suhr designed the 3+ tube preamp, formed Custom Audio Amplifiers (CAA) to work alongside Bradshaw's CAE manufacturing it, and moved out to LA to dive into the rack business. "We added an

MARIPOSA

Introducing the all new Ernie Ball Music Man Mariposa Deluxe in Imperial White.
An artist collaboration with world-renowned composer & guitarist Omar Rodríguez-López.

ERNIE BALL MUSIC MAN

Solder of fortune! The master Bob Bradshaw at work today – "this business goes in cycles"

active tube-stage EQ at the end of the preamp," Bradshaw explains, "so that would give bass and treble and a level control to push these flat power amps. And that gave us more tonality all the way around. The clean channel had as much level as the lead and crunch channels now.

"The clean channel on the Soldano was a little weak, it always needed help. So we fixed all those things and gave it our take on what we thought was the best-sounding preamp. Of course, Mike [Soldano] was not necessarily thrilled when we came out with this preamp, but he understood… and it was my idea in the first place. And he's a good guy, he was cool."

THE END OF AN ERA

Ironically, it was the intended epitome of the rack-mounted effects that served, in part at least, to turn the tide back away from this format. If one decent sound in a 19-inch-wide unit was good, a plethora of sounds packed into a single rack-mounted box had to be better, right? Not so much.

"A lot of manufacturers started coming out with multi-effects and you get jazzed about it at first, but then you go, 'No, this thing's a pain in the ass to sit there and press a button and watch the number scroll…' It takes time, and they might switch slowly for channel-switching or MIDI control or something. And they have 12 effects! ART had a rackmount thing that you could use 12 simultaneous effects in 'em, and most of 'em sounded like shit!"

Many discerning artists soon turned away from these outwardly versatile new tools, and yet many still stuck with their single-sound units, the revival of trad single-effect pedals throughout the 90s and into the 2000s helped to change up the rack rig further.

"I was still going with the original stuff that I used in the first place," says Bradshaw. "The best stuff for me was stuff like Lexicon PCM70s for reverb and reverb only, or the PCM42s, one of the greatest delays ever made, so the racks were big because you had a lot of one-trick ponies in it."

By Bradshaw's estimation, the natural ageing of the guitarists who were using the things accounted for a big part of the rack system's demise, too. The guys who weren't paying someone to haul these big rigs got tired of doing it themselves as they turned 35, 40, or more; and for the guys who did pay cartage and freight companies, such costs "went through the roof," in Bradshaw's words, from the late 90s.

That, and the boom in old-school effects pedals, brought so many new flavours to the table that guitarists were eager to dive back into the pedalboard-based effects rigs that were the norm when Bradshaw first entered the game in the late 70s.

"You got instant gratification from a pedal," he declares. "You turned a knob, you heard a result immediately. The other thing, too, is that rack-mounted gear often is considerably more expensive than spending $200 for a pedal. You can go out and spend $600 on a bunch of pedals and get instant gratification, whereas you'd have to save up some dough in order to buy your latest rack-mounted hoosiwhatsis. So that was a big factor, too."

CLOSING THE CIRCLE

Today, after moving 'back east' to Pennsylvania several years ago, Bradshaw finds himself having gone nearly full circle in this business. Although many of the ingredients have changed, the process and format are much the same as they were when he started.

"This business goes in cycles, you know? When I started, I was dealing with Boss pedals and MXR pedals and a few rackmount things." Now, he explains, it's not a whole lot different, there's just more variety. Also, these days the rack component is more often likely to be a modelling solution like those from Fractal, which Bradshaw frequently integrates with traditional pedals and tube amps.

"I do that with [U2's] Edge," he tells us. "It's a pretty massive system. And I did another pretty large hybrid system, as I call it, with Steph Carpenter of Deftones. He likes his gear! He's got drawers of pedals, he's got a Fractal in there, and he went back to his tube Marshall preamp, so he goes that way.

"The Fractals are not exclusive anymore, they're used in combination. And a lot of guys will just use them for their effects. I don't feel threatened by that stuff at all. I welcome it! Because it's just another wrench in the toolbox, man, that a musician has at their disposal."

THE NEW ROCKBOARD® by WARWICK PEDALBOARD SERIES

- Lightweight, rigid and rugged
- 1 Solid piece of cold-rolled aluminum (no weld seams)
- 7 Sizes guarantees the right fit for you
- Power Supply Mounting Solutions

EVERY ROCKBOARD® IS AVAILABLE WITH A GIG BAG OR FLIGHT CASE!

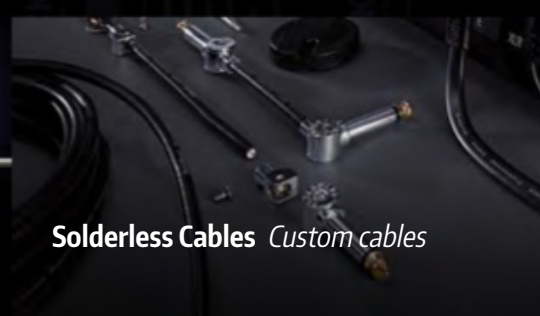
rockboard.net FRAMUSWARWICKUK

INNOVATIVE ACCESSORIES :

The Tray *Power Supply Mounting*

MOD *Patchbays*

Power LT XL *Power Station*



Solderless Cables *Custom cables*

THE RUNDOWN

GUITAR SYNTH PEDALS

WORDS CILLIAN BREATHNACH

Over the last few years, guitar synth pedals have become increasingly popular, and increasingly easy to use – here are eight of the best…

ELECTRO-HARMONIX SYNTH9
£194

1 EHX's take on the multi-voiced synth pedal has nine sounds packed into its moderately-sized enclosure. Each one is vastly different from the last, with the two control knobs affecting different parameters for each synth model – everything thing from blending in different octaves, or increasing the sound's attack speed. Put that all together and it means a near-endlessly varied palette of retro sounds can be coaxed from this box.

MERIS ENZO
£319

2 Incorporating an envelope filter, ring modulation, a multi-voice dual oscillator, MIDI clock synchronisation, and much, much more, the Enzo is a no-holds-barred premium synth pedal. The deceptively simple controls allow for an enormous amount of tweaking of either monophonic, polyphonic or arpeggiated synth voices, and it has the scope for creating some truly space-age sounds, even before you plug in an expression pedal.

SOURCE AUDIO C4
£249

3 The C4 was inspired by Source Audio's chief sound engineer Bob Chidlaw's own Eurorack synthesiser, and while it might seem like a fairly simple pedal with its four controls, don't be fooled – the C4 is capable of being hooked up to an external editor program, and that's where the fun begins. This external tweakability means the controls on the box are reserved for basic operation such as setting the wet/dry mix or the waveform, but it also makes the C4 much more pedalboard-friendly.

SEYMOUR DUNCAN FOOZ
£339

5 Seymour Duncan bills the Fooz as an "analogue fuzz synthesiser", as its synth tone is generated by slamming your guitar signal into a square wave with a fuzz, which then acts as the oscillator component for the rest of the pedal's modules. Due to the straightforward, analogue nature of the pedal, it can blend monophonic synth tones with more traditional fuzz and tremolo sounds.

EARTHQUAKER DEVICES RAINBOW MACHINE
£225

6 EQD says the Rainbow Machine is "built around a DSP pitch-warping engine that's designed to be slightly imperfect; coloured with digital remnants of the cosmic dust we've picked up across the multiverse." In other words, it's unapologetically weird-sounding. The pedal pitch-shifts your signal and feeds it back as extremely modulated harmony, along with "pixie trails", which rise or fall into oscillated strangeness – and the result doesn't sound *anything* like a guitar.

KEELEY SYNTH-1
£179

7 Back on earth, Keeley is offering a more straightforward box with the Synth-1. Level, filter, attack and blend knobs all control a monophonic oscillator, with three waveforms to be selected. The reverse attack of the pedal allows for fuzzy swells, and an expression pedal can control the pedal's filter – effectively functioning as a wah.

RED WITCH SYNTHOTRON II
£125

4 The Synthotron offers separate synth and envelope filter sections, as well as an LFO – all serving the main dual-synth engine, which can evoke both the soundtrack to a 70s sci-fi movie or the bit-crushed sounds of an 8-bit video game. Either way, the Synthotron offers up some truly strange analogue tones with a lot of tweaking to boot.

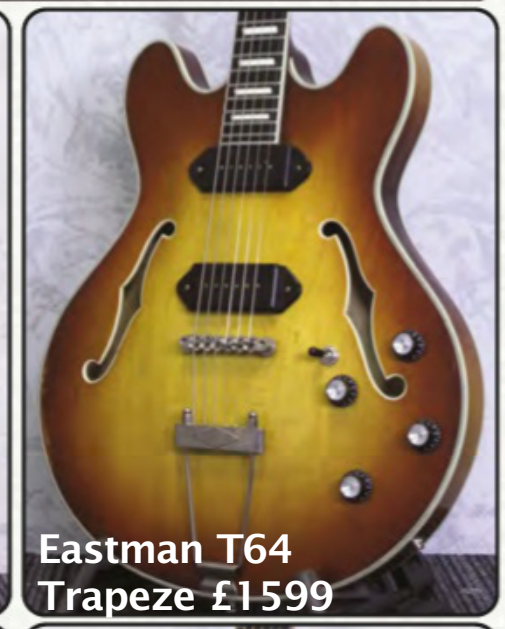
PIGTRONIX MOTHERSHIP 2
£269

8 With five dual-concentric controls, the Mothership has three main voices on tap: triangle, square and sine waves, with the latter being shifted down an octave for an extra thick tone. Pigtronix is also keen to mention that it boasts the "world's fastest tracking circuit" – so fast playing shouldn't present any issues. The Mothership is also velocity-sensitive, meaning it responds more organically to your dynamics.

Forsyth
Est 1857

Highlights Of The Month

Gretsch G5420T Ltd
Cadillac Green £799


Eastman T64
Trapeze £1599

Atkin L36
Black £2999

Martin DX 30th
Anniversary £665

Hofner Klaus Voorman
60th Anniversary£4500

Danelectro '66 BT
Baritone £799

ACOUSTICS
Main dealer for Lowden, Atkin, Brook, Moon, Patrick James Eggle, Martin, Faith, Auden, Seagull, Fender, Eastman, Aria, Crafter, Maton, Furch, Tanglewood

CLASSICALS
Main dealer for Buguet, Ramirez, Raimundo, Sanchez, Ortega, Admira, Cordoba and Strunal

ELECTRICS AND BASSES
Main dealer for Rickenbacker, Gordon Smith, Eastman, Fender, Gretsch, Danelectro, Maton, Squier, Revelation, Aria, Hofner, Godin, Cort

Repair department specialising in acoustic and electric guitars

Spread across five stories in the heart of Manchester, Forsyth specialise in a full range of musical instruments, sheet music, a recorded music department specialising in classical and jazz and instrument repair

www.forsyths.co.uk/guitars
Forsyth Brothers Ltd, 126 Deansgate, Manchester M3 2GR
@ForsythMusic Forsyths.Music.Shop

CODA MUSIC

www.coda-music.com

Gibson

Great selection of Gibson 2018 USA, Memphis, Custom and Montana guitars in stock.

Echopark GUITARS

With an artist roster including Joe Perry, Josh Homme & Troy Van Leeuwen - these guitars mean business! Coda Music are excited to be the first and only UK dealer to stock these stunning guitars! New delivery due soon, including Model J, 59 and La Carne.

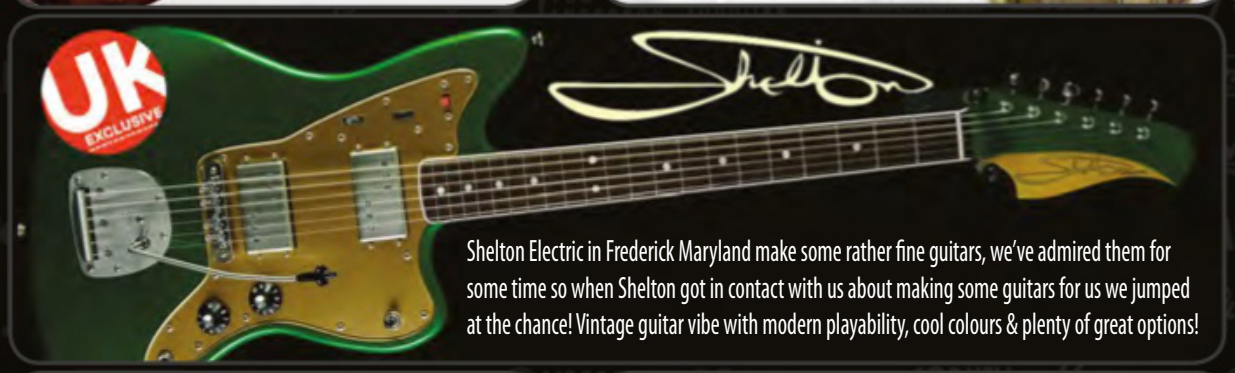
dunable custom guitars

Los Angeles

Sasha Dunable makes some scarily good guitars in Glendale California. We had one through as a trade in a while back and were so impressed that we contacted Sasha and got him to build some for us.

Fender

Leading supplier of all things Fender and Squier, whether you're after a Strat or Tele, Jaguar or Jazzmaster, Precision or Jazz, you're sure to find it at Coda Music.



Shelton

Shelton Electric in Frederick Maryland make some rather fine guitars, we've admired them for some time so when Shelton got in contact with us about making some guitars for us we jumped at the chance! Vintage guitar vibe with modern playability, cool colours & plenty of great options!

Swart AMPLIFIER COMPANY

Here at Coda we love Swart Amps. Full range in stock from the little 6V6SE to the Atomic Space Tone, right up to the new Antares.

Full range of Two Rock Heads, Combos and Cabinets in stock

Two-Rock

FUCHS AUDIO TECHNOLOGY

Their growing product line includes Fuchs amp models from 4 to 100 watts.

Fuchs Audio Technology has established itself as a highly respected new voice in handcrafted amplification and custom effects.

fano guitars

The only place in the UK to see Fano guitars. New Fano Standard models now arriving. You could say the Fano Standard series is Fano's "greatest hits" collection. After studying their order history of custom Alt de Facto guitar line they combined the most popular requests of features & options into a new line of ready-to-play guitars.

We are delighted to be stocking Morgan amps and effects. First delivery now in.

MORGAN AMPLIFICATION

Bartel AMPLIFIERS

New line of amps from Mark Bartel, the amplification genius behind Tone King. Hand built by Mark in Baltimore with fantastic attention to detail & no expense spared...

100's of secondhand guitars, amps & pedals in stock, see www.coda-music.com for an up to date list.

We buy secondhand guitars - bring yours in for a quote & try something new at the same time

Fender CUSTOM SHOP

WHEN YOU'RE READY A Custom Shop guitar embodies everything Fender has learned over 60 years of building the world's most revered electric solidbodies. The finest materials, all the right details, hand built in Corona, California – it's the guitar of your dreams, realised.

WE HAVE THE GUITAR FOR YOU Coda Music is Europe's biggest and best Fender Custom Shop dealer, so whether you want a perfect New Old Stock, vintage-correct model, or the heaviest of Heavy Relics with a raft of custom playability tweaks, you'll find it here and with over 100 in stock in one store you won't find a better selection anywhere.

UNIQUE TO US, UNIQUE TO YOU Our extensive in-store stock includes many custom ordered guitars, built to our own exacting specs after years of buying, selling and playing these fabulous instruments.

CAN WE BUILD IT? Yes we can! If you have that extra special something in mind, we can work with you to make it a reality. Custom orders can be ready in a matter of months and cost less than you might think – call us, email us or drop in to discuss your perfect combination of features.

Novo GUITARS BY DENNIS FANO

Coda Music are proud & delighted to be dealers of these fine instruments. Visit us instore to try one today.

Famous for the stunning and, quite frankly, game-changing Alt De Facto line of guitars, Dennis has become one of the most respected master luthiers and guitar designers of modern times. Dennis has been working on a new vision for the modern electric guitar...ladies and gentlemen i give you...Novo Guitars!!!

CARR AMPLIFIERS

Great selection of models and finishes, Europe's number one Carr amp dealer. Carr Mercury V now in stock.

Asher GUITARS & LAP STEELS

LOS ANGELES • CALIFORNIA

Asher Guitars & Lap Steels is dedicated to handcrafting stellar quality instruments that can be appreciated by musicians of all types.

Effects

Coda Music bring you the finest guitar effects pedals money can buy!...ready for you to demo with a your choice of amplifier and guitar!!!

Our pedal range includes the usual suspects such as Boss, Electro Harmonix, Ibanez, Jim Dunlop, Joyo, Line 6, Mesa Boogie, Mooer, MXR, Strymon, T-Rex, TC Electronic, Visual Sound, Voodoo Lab, Wampler, Way Huge, Xotic.....we also have a huge selection of the less ordinary suspects like Bad Cat, Death By Audio, Earthquaker Devices, EWS, Faifield Electronic, Free The Tone, Fulltone Custom Shop, Jetter Gear, Keeley, Mad Professor, Providence, Rothwell and Sonic Edge!!!

51a High Street, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 3AH t: 01438 350 815 e: stevenage@coda-music.co.uk

Acoustic Centre 27b Church Lane, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 3QW t: 01438 350815 e: acoustics@coda-music.com

Instant decision 9 months 0% finance

available on all new products over £300 on our website

REVIEWS

CONTENTS

088 MUSIC MAN MARIPOSA
092 FENDER ALTERNATE REALITY ELECTRIC XII
094 DANELECTRO 59X12
096 TAYLOR 562CE
100 D'ANGELICO DELUXE BRIGHTON
106 HARMONY STANDARD SERIES JUPITER & REBEL
110 AUDEN ARTIST MAHOGANY JULIA & ROSEWOOD JULIA
116 FENDER TONE MASTER DELUXE REVERB & TWIN REVERB
120 BOSS KATANA-50 MKII
124 HUDSON BROADCAST-AP
126 MXR CLONE LOOPER
128 RODENBERG TB DRIVE SHAKEDOWN SPECIAL

LOOKING FOR MORE REVIEWS?
VISIT GUITAR.COM

MUSICMAN.
VOLUME
VOLUME

MUSIC MAN
MARIPOSA DELUXE

MICHAEL WATTS

Guitar EDITOR'S CHOICE

Music Man teams up with Omar Rodríguez-López for a new, high-performance offset electric

Founded in 1974 and acquired by Ernie Ball 10 years later, California's Music Man has made it its business to work closely with leading players to offer a series of collaborative designs. The Mariposa was created in tandem with Omar Rodríguez-López, the diminutive southpaw whirlwind powering At The Drive-In, The Mars Volta and latterly, an eponymous solo project.

The solidbody Mariposa features the same geometric design language as instruments made for MM stablemates Annie Clark and Albert Lee with its isosceles horns and reverse body, rather like a cubist Jazzmaster. It features a roasted maple neck and a lightweight Okoume body, which is chamfered on the back and neck heel for comfort. Both seated and strapped on, it's extremely comfortable and balanced.

Rodríguez-López is known for pulling a huge variety of tones and textures out of his instruments and whereas his previous signature model with Ibanez featured a single-coil-sized bridge humbucker, the Music Man Mariposa comes loaded with a pair of full-sized PAF-style 'buckers set directly into the body, with individual volume controls but no tone pot.

Whammy bar duties are taken care of by a smooth and reliable Music Man Modern vibrato with chevron cover and vintage bent-steel saddles. The smooth gunstock oil and hand-rubbed wax finish on the back of the neck feels as fast and luxurious as expected, while the 10-inch radius ebony

The angular pickguard features an ornate floral design

With no tone controls, tonal colour comes from pickup selection and blending volumes. Stutter effects are a must-try!

The tidy and fast ebony fingerboard has Atlante block inlays

The Mariposa has a smooth Music Man Modern vibrato bridge with bent-steel saddles and chevron cover

KEY FEATURES

PRICE £3,349 (inc. hard case)
DESCRIPTION 6-string electric guitar, made in USA
BUILD Okoume body, C-profile roasted maple neck with gunstock oil and hand-rubbed wax blend, ebony fingerboard with Atlante block inlays, 22x high-profile, medium-width frets, 10" fingerboard radius, Ernie Ball Compensated Nut
HARDWARE Music Man Modern vibrato bridge with bent-steel saddles and chevron cover. Schaller locking machineheads
ELECTRONICS 2x Music Man custom-wound humbucking pickups, 2x individual volume controls, 3-way pickup selector switch
SCALE LENGTH 25.5"/648mm
NECK WIDTH 41mm at nut, 50mm at 12th fret
NECK DEPTH 20mm at first fret, 24mm at 12th fret
STRING SPACING 34mm at nut, 54mm at bridge
WEIGHT 3.1kg/6.8lb
LEFT-HANDERS Yes
FINISH Imperial White (as reviewed), Imperial Black high-gloss polyester
OPTIONS Mariposa Standard (£3,249) with chrome hardware in Pueblo Pink and Dorado Green
CONTACT Strings & Things stringsandthings.co.uk, music-man.com

fretboard allows for unencumbered bends of several semitones even above the body join. Time to plug in…

IN USE

We start off with the neck humbucker selected into a clean tweed amp. Barres up and down the neck are rich and articulate with open string chords sounding beautiful and evocative. Even without effects, this is an exceptional clean sound, but add a little modulation and delay and things get tasty.

The in-between position is where the Mariposa offers the most versatility. With no tone control, tonal changes come from blending both pickups, rather than attenuating the treble response. Experimentation is rewarded as there are some very musical in-between sounds on offer here, while the twin volume controls also make tremolo and selector-switch stutter effects a joy.

Moving to the bridge position gives us an airy and open take on the quintessential PAF sound. It walks a fine line, offering aggression and sophistication in equal measure, and frankly begs to be shown some dirt. Who could resist?

Winding up the amp summons a throaty, joyful roar with exceptional sustain. Extended chord work and intricate solo playing come through loud and clear (literally) and the guitar has the immediacy of response and punch needed to articulate the often extreme tempo changes characteristic of Rodríguez-López's playing.

Over the years, the Music Man company's relationships with players who demand more than most from their guitars has led to a deep understanding of what goes into an exceptional professional instrument – the Mariposa is exactly that. G

9/10 **A responsive and exhilarating guitar for players of any flavour**

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

Fender Custom Shop 1959 Jazzmaster Journeyman Relic **£3,499**, Suhr Classic JM Pro (with 510 Trem) **£2,195**, Novo Serus J **£3,799**

BE
PROVOCATEUR
ARTIST: AND SO I WATCH YOU FROM AFAR
Designed in the UK by Patrick James Eggle
Solid Mahogany Body
Roasted Mahogany Neck
Truly Vintage Scale Length
Ebony Fingerboard
USA Seymour Duncan Pickups
ShergoldGuitars.com
Guitarist CHOICE
SHERGOLD

FENDER
ALTERNATE REALITY ELECTRIC XII

Guitar EDITOR'S CHOICE

WORDS CHRIS VINNICOMBE

The Fender Electric XII might be the one 12-string design that's cooler than a Rickenbacker. Now it's back in this keenly priced incarnation from sunny Baja California in Mexico…

Manufactured for only four years between 1965-69, Fender's Electric XII left a significant footprint in the history of rock. Featuring most famously on *Stairway To Heaven*, the purpose-built 12-string design was aimed primarily at folk-rockers, but found favour with a diverse bunch, from Jimmy Page and Pete Townshend to Lou Reed, Tim Buckley and later Nick McCabe. And although Bryan Adams sang about his "first real six-string" on *Summer Of '69*, an Electric XII features prominently in the song's arrangement.

Returning to the catalogue half a century after it was discontinued, 2019's Electric XII is one of the stars of Fender's Alternate Reality series – limited-edition, Mexican-made models which mix and match features from a variety of instruments and eras. As such, our review guitar isn't a faithful reissue of the 1960s original and some design changes have been implemented.

Like the 1960s model, only six of the Electric XII's strings are strung through-body – the octave and unison strings top-load through the back of the modern bridge, which provides individual intonation adjustment for the full dozen. Surrounded by a plate with a similar outline to the original Electric XII bridge, the new unit has a footprint more like that of a Strat hardtail, while the saddles resemble those used on current Danelectro 12-strings.

Electronics comprise a pair of old-school Split-Coil pickups paired with a master tone and master volume, while the four-way rotary selector switch that delivered series and parallel pickup combinations back in the day has been jettisoned. Fans of the old series setting will lament its passing, but players new to the model won't know what they're missing and many will prefer the ease and familiarity of a three-position toggle.

The body's bass-side horn is a little sharper than a typical Jazzmaster, giving the Electric XII slightly more futuristic lines. Replicating Lake Placid Blue is something of a moving target, but the slightly greenish hue of the gloss polyester finish here, with its hint of Ocean Turquoise, is as cool as a Norwegian plunge pool. The pau ferro board is rich and chocolatey enough not to

The ‘hockey-stick’ headstock is imposing, but strapped-on balance is excellent

Six of the strings are strung through the body: the octave strings are top-loaded

Split-Coil pickups are a nod to the original 60s Electric XII

appear anaemic and the look is completed by the hockey-stick headstock. Despite the size of the peghead and the hardware onboard, strapped-on balance is excellent.

IN USE

Neck dimensions are of huge importance to prospective 12-string buyers and happily, our review guitar’s 42.5mm nut width and even string spacing hit the bullseye – it’s neither too cramped nor unwieldy. The combination of a 9.5-inch ’board radius, comfortable ‘C’ shaped satin-finished neck, low action and 21 medium-jumbo frets delivers about as easy a playing experience as you’ll get from a 12-string of any brand. In terms of playing technique, the only adjustment required is the need to be quite deliberate with downstrokes when you want every octave note to ring out.

Once you plug in and get past the familiar Beatles, Byrds and Petty-isms, you’ll find an awful lot of inspiration can be unlocked – it’s a guitar that suits modern-day experimentalists and stompbox addicts down to the ground. The natural wooziness of a 12 adds a hint of shoegaze-y psychedelia to proceedings even when dry, but add a long plate reverb and combine it with echo or tremolo and you’ll quickly find yourself in ambient heaven.

Despite the low action, it’s great for slide and it loves drive – the octave strings adding new textural interest to otherwise familiar lines. We spend a lot of time exploring the fullness of the neck pickup, but the softer middle setting is ideal for strumming, while the strident bridge unit has plenty of bite and aggression. Fifty years on and at such an accessible price point, the Fender Electric XII might be more relevant than ever. G

KEY FEATURES

PRICE £859 (inc. gigbag)
DESCRIPTION Solidbody 12-string electric guitar. Made in Mexico
BUILD Offset alder body, bolt-on maple neck with 9.5” radius pau ferro fingerboard, dot inlays, 21 medium-jumbo frets and synthetic bone nut
HARDWARE 12-saddle hardtail bridge, vintage-style tuners
ELECTRICS 2x Split-Coil Electric XII pickups, volume, tone, 3-way toggle pickup selector switch
SCALE LENGTH 25.5”/648mm
NECK WIDTH 42.5mm at nut, 51.6mm at 12th fret
NECK DEPTH 21.7mm at first fret, 23.2mm at 12th fret
STRING SPACING 38.1mm at nut, 55.3mm at bridge
WEIGHT 8.6lb/3.9kg
FINISH Lake Placid Blue (as reviewed), 3-Colour Sunburst, Olympic White
CONTACT Fender EMEA fender.com

9/10 **Inspiring sonics and stable performance – it’s great to have the Electric XII back**

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

Guild Starfire IV ST-12 **£1,189**, Rickenbacker 330/12 **£2,689**, Danelectro Vintage 12-String **£579**

DANELECTRO 59X12

WORDS ED OLESZKO

Guitar EDITOR'S CHOICE

The guitar Danelectro is calling its "best-sounding 12-string ever" comes with an interesting array of pickups that go way beyond 1960s sonics…

With short-horn body shapes, semi-hollow construction and hot-rod looks, Danelectro's 59 series instruments are something of a go-to for players searching for retro tones at affordable prices. The 59X12 is a new 12-string which shares many features with the more old-school 59 models in the range, but deviates in the pickup department – a 'vintage-style large housing single coil' in the neck position and a neat humbucking dual Lipstick design with a coil split replace the alnico Lipstick pickups of old.

Upon removal from the shipping carton (no case or gigbag is supplied), we're immediately captivated by the cool chrome hardware, sleek retro lines and classy red finish, combined with an impressive first unplugged strum. The wide-but-slim C-profile neck, impressive playability and an in-tune setup makes for an instantly enjoyable ticket to ride, if you will.

IN USE

The sweet, shimmering unplugged voice has decent warmth, clarity and note definition, which promises much when amplified. Plugged in, these tonal qualities are even more abundant; perhaps it's that unusual pickup combo, but we've never played a richer or fuller-sounding electric 12-string.

Split the bridge humbucker by pulling up the tone knob – this is no mean feat because the knobs may look cool, but they can be difficult to grip: a pick/fingernail inserted underneath helps – add a compressor pedal and every 60s jingle-jangle riff awaits at your fingertips. Unlike a Rickenbacker 12, the high octave strings sit above the regular

Unlike on a Rickenbacker 12, the additional strings sit above the regular ones

The angled neck single-coil pickup offers bark

The knobs are stylish but the push-pull tone isn't the easiest to grip

From body-shape to headstock, design is classic Danelectro

KEY FEATURES

PRICE £599
DESCRIPTION 12-string electric guitar. Made in Korea
BUILD Semi-hollow masonite construction with ply centre block and frame, bolt-on maple neck with 14" radius pau ferro fingerboard, 21 medium-jumbo frets, aluminium nut
HARDWARE Fully adjustable hardtail bridge, sealed tuners
ELECTRONICS Dual humbucking Lipstick pickup (bridge), vintage-style large housing single-coil (neck), 3-way toggle pickup selector, master volume, master tone (push-pull coil split for bridge pickup)
SCALE LENGTH 25"/635mm
NECK WIDTH 45.4mm at nut, 54.9mm at 12th fret
NECK DEPTH 21.3mm at first fret, 22.5mm at 12th fret
STRING SPACING 38.5mm at nut, 55.4mm at bridge
WEIGHT 3.47kg/7.10lb
LEFT-HANDERS No
FINISH Blood Red (as reviewed), Vintage Cream, Black
CONTACT jhs.co.uk, danelectro.com

strings, adding prominence to the upper octave shimmer.

Switch back to humbucker mode and a more forthright tone abides, clarity is retained but the whole sonic spectrum fills out. Single note runs, double stops and chords all over the neck bark with authority – this is not your grandad's 12, that's for sure!

Flip to that neck pickup and the snarling P-90 midrange that's hinted at by the appearance of the pickup is notably absent; instead the guitar reveals arguably its best voice, as the natural warmth of the neck position is complemented by a flattering mid-scoop and a top-end that sparkles and shimmers with the kind of air usually reserved for far more expensive instruments! Flip to the combined middle position with the bridge humbucker coil split and revel in a sweet percussive voice with acoustic overtones for utterly addictive rhythm tone that you could strum for many a hard day's night.

The fun doesn't stop there; instead, the hotter pickup pairing becomes an inspired choice as you wind up the wick. A huge, richly overdriven slab of rhythm tone awaits, sparkling with rich harmonics reminiscent of a double tracked overdub, rather than 60s jangle clichés.

Add some fuzz, a slide and slip into an open tuning for some of the most expressive and exciting garage-psych-rock fun we've had for quite a while. If points were given for grin-inducing fun, this guitar would score very highly.

9/10 **With easy playability and broad tonal palette, there's far more than jingle jangle to be had from this distinctive 12-string**

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

Fender Alternate Reality Electric XII **£859**, Gretsch G5422G-12 Electromatic Hollow-Body Double Cut **£1,009**, Danelectro Vintage 12 **£579**

TAYLOR 562CE

HUW PRICE

Guitar EDITOR'S CHOICE

V-Class bracing has already produced stunning results in Taylor's six-string acoustic line, but what happens when Andy Powers turns his attention to the 12-string?

Twelve-string acoustics can present physical challenges as well as impacting on your playing technique. Happily, Taylor's Grand Concert body measures just 19.5 x 15-inches and when coupled with a 12th fret neck join, it gives this 562ce a compact, streamlined and intimate feel. The body is combined with a shorter than usual 24.875-inch scale length, which equates to lower string tension and easier stretches.

Of course, the really big deal is that this is our first opportunity to try a 12-string equipped with Andy Powers' V-Class bracing. First introduced on Taylor's top-end models, V-Class bracing has since been rolling out across the company's complete USA product range.

This is an all 'tropical mahogany' guitar, which is Taylor's catch-all term for mahogany sourced from Central and South America. Some builders refer to it as 'true mahogany' to differentiate between this and sapele or African mahogany, and it costs more because it's generally considered superior in tone. Besides the spruce braces, ebony is used here for the fingerboard, bridge and peghead overlay.

Taylor also uses ebony on the fingerboard edges to conceal the fret ends without appearing to use binding at all, and even the six bridge pins are ebony. Taylor's new double-mounted string anchoring system means each string pairing is secured by a single pin. This maintains a consistent break angle over the saddle for greater tonal consistency.

The finishing quality is something special. The mahogany has seen some medium brown stain, which has enhanced the grain and knocked back some of the reddishness without eliminating it completely. A darker brown has been sprayed around the edges, both front and back, to create a subtle sunburst effect.

There's more shading around the sides, too, where the central areas graduate into a darker brown closer to the tortoiseshell binding. The binding itself looks spectacular in a classy and understated way. For the most part it appears a dark tobacco brown, but there are sporadic slashes of red and amber.

In Taylor terms, the 562ce is the full package, because it has a Venetian cutaway and an onboard Taylor Expression System 2. Three piezo sensors are located between the

This Taylor is the most 'in tune' 12-string acoustic we've ever encountered

saddle and bridge pins rather than under the saddle, with three low-profile controls – volume, bass and treble – located on the upper bout just above the neck join. The latest preamp produces about 25 per cent higher output than Taylor's earlier designs.

IN USE

Session ace Tommy Tedesco once told a story about turning up to a studio date with his acoustic, only to discover the producer wanted a 12-string. Having only brought a six-string along to the session, Tommy asked the producer to wait while he changed guitars, bounced his guitar off the floor to knock it slightly out of tune and then hit a chord. Not being able to see what Tommy was up to, the producer declared that was the exact sound he was looking for.

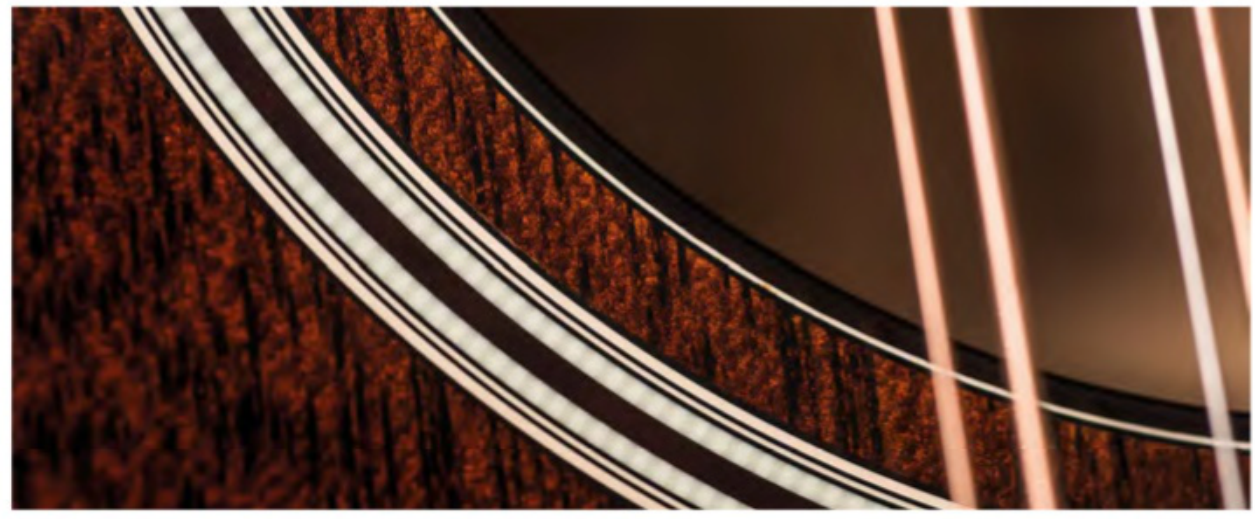
The reason for repeating that anecdote is that if a slightly woozy, out-of-tune character informs your perception of 12-string acoustics, the 562ce might come as something of a shock. Put simply, this is the most in-tune 12-string acoustic we have ever encountered.

We've previously remarked on the unusually accurate intonation of V-Class Taylors, and the same factors are at play here. We also notice that each of the E, A and D strings have individual saddle takeoff points. This is particularly apparent on the low E and its accompanying higher octave string, and demonstrates the fine attention to detail for which Taylor has been long renowned.

Everythng is tastefully darkly matched, from ebony bridge pins to the ring detail on the rosette (below)

KEY FEATURES

PRICE £3,378 (inc Taylor Deluxe hardshell case)
DESCRIPTION All-solid wood electro-acoustic 12-string guitar, made in the USA
BUILD Tropical mahogany top with V-Class bracing, solid tropical mahogany back and sides, tropical mahogany neck, West African ebony bridge, bridge pins, fingerboard and peghead overlay, 12th fret neck join, nickel plated Taylor-branded tuners, Tusq nut and compensated Micarta saddle, multi-ply purfling, tortoiseshell binding, grained ivoroid/ tortoiseshell rosette
SCALE LENGTH 632mm/24.875”
NECK WIDTH 47.6mm at nut, 58.9mm at 12th fret
NECK DEPTH 22.8mm at first fret, 24.5mm at 9th fret
STRING SPACING 41.3mm at nut, 58.3mm at bridge
WEIGHT 2.14kg/4.7lb
ELECTRICS Expression System 2
LEFT HANDERS Yes
FINISH Medium Brown Stain with Shaded Edge Burst. UV cured polyester gloss body, UV cured polyester/polyurethane satin neck
CONTACT taylorguitars.com



Again, we hear that pre-produced quality that we’ve come to associate with V-Class bracing. There’s no boominess, and instead the frequency and balance remain utterly even from the nut end to the top of the fingerboard. The sustain impresses greatly and there’s an absence of sonic clutter because notes aren’t beating on each other in some sort of harmonic free-for-all.

This, in tandem with the astonishing intonation, frees you up to attempt things you might otherwise shy away from on a 12-string. Try forming an E major chord above the neck join, leaving the B and all the E strings ringing open – it sounds perfect. Place your index finger on the B string and start sliding the shape around with the open E strings ringing, and it’s like Pete Townshend has been double-tracked. You can even use a capo without feeling apprehensive, and marvel as the 562ce begins to closely mimic harpsichord and mandolin textures.

The even frequency balance is probably attributable to the small body size as well as the bracing. There’s plenty of depth, but the bass never becomes overpowering. Similarly, the treble frequencies float and shimmer, but it’s not the dominant sonic characteristic. Instead, the midrange comes through with an articulate and fluid quality, where the octave strings enhance and add complexity without becoming the main event.

We have always rated the Expression System 2 pretty highly, but results can vary depending on the guitar. We’ve never heard it sound better than it does on the 562ce. It captures the tone in a full and very detailed way that sounds convincingly ‘acoustic’.

The 562ce won’t be for everyone. This isn’t really a 12-string for retro stylists looking to channel Blind Willie McTell, Huddie Ledbetter and Pete Seeger, but that doesn’t mean it lacks character. Instead it’s a toneful, dynamic and well-mannered 12-string that’s almost as easy to play as a six-string.

We remain unconvinced by the practice of combining a cutaway with a strap button on the underside of the heel, but aside from the plastic truss-rod cover, everything about this luxurious instrument justifies its price-point, and it’s clearly intended for the most serious and committed of 12-string players. For many of us, 12-string electrics and acoustics tend to end up as ‘special effect’ guitars, but if the glorious tone and playability of the 562ce don’t convert you, nothing will. G

9/10 **A 21st century take on the 12-string acoustic, with unsurpassed intonation and playability, superb tone and simply fabulous build quality**

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

Lowden O32 12-string **£3,690**, Guild F-512 **£3,545**, Gibson Songwriter 12-string **£2,399**

The North American Guitar

The UK Home of the Finest Custom Guitars

The UK's Premier Destination Guitar Showroom

B&G Bourgeois Guitars · GREENFIELD GUITARS · KOSTAL GUITARS · MAYBACH · NIK HUBER guitars · RICK TURNER GUITARS · Santa Cruz Guitar Company

The Barns, London Road, Bourne End, Hemel Hempstead, Herts, HP1 2RH

TheNorthAmericanGuitar.com

D'ANGELICO
DELUXE BRIGHTON

MICHAEL WATTS

An original solidbody rock beast from a historic name best known for jazz instruments – what's going on?

The name D'Angelico is synonymous with exquisite handmade archtops from the 1930s. However, the brand was resurrected in 2011 with a range of new USA and Pacific Rim guitars bringing flat-top acoustic and solidbody electric diversity to an f-hole heavy portfolio.

The new electric line has been received especially well, with players such as Susan Tedeschi and Kurt Rosenwinkel seen with D'Angelico models on stage and in the studio. The Deluxe Brighton model – made by a select team of luthiers in Korea – is the latest addition to the D'Angelico range. It features a double-cut swamp ash body and a 'set thru' maple neck which joins the body at the 20th fret, giving excellent access to the whole fingerboard.

Aesthetically the Deluxe Brighton is no shrinking violet. It takes many of its visual cues from the original Art Deco D'Angelico designs, from the ornate headstock shape and locking Grover Super Rotomatic machine heads, to the ebony knobs and seven-ply cream and black body binding. Even the five-ply tortoiseshell scratchplate hints at the shape of an f-hole.

The Hunter Green body finish is striking and the diagonal transition from the gloss texture of the body and headstock to the smooth matt on the back of the neck is particularly elegant. However, the heavy black filler around the pearl block inlays detracts from the beauty of the pau ferro fretboard.

Given the length of the neck, it's no real surprise that the Deluxe Brighton has a tendency to pitch downwards, even on a wide strap. Despite this, the chamfered

That headstock still boasts the grandeur of 1930s Art Deco

Both pickups feature coil-splits via push/pull tone controls

body feels comfortable, although Strat wranglers may wish for a contoured edge for the forearm, too.

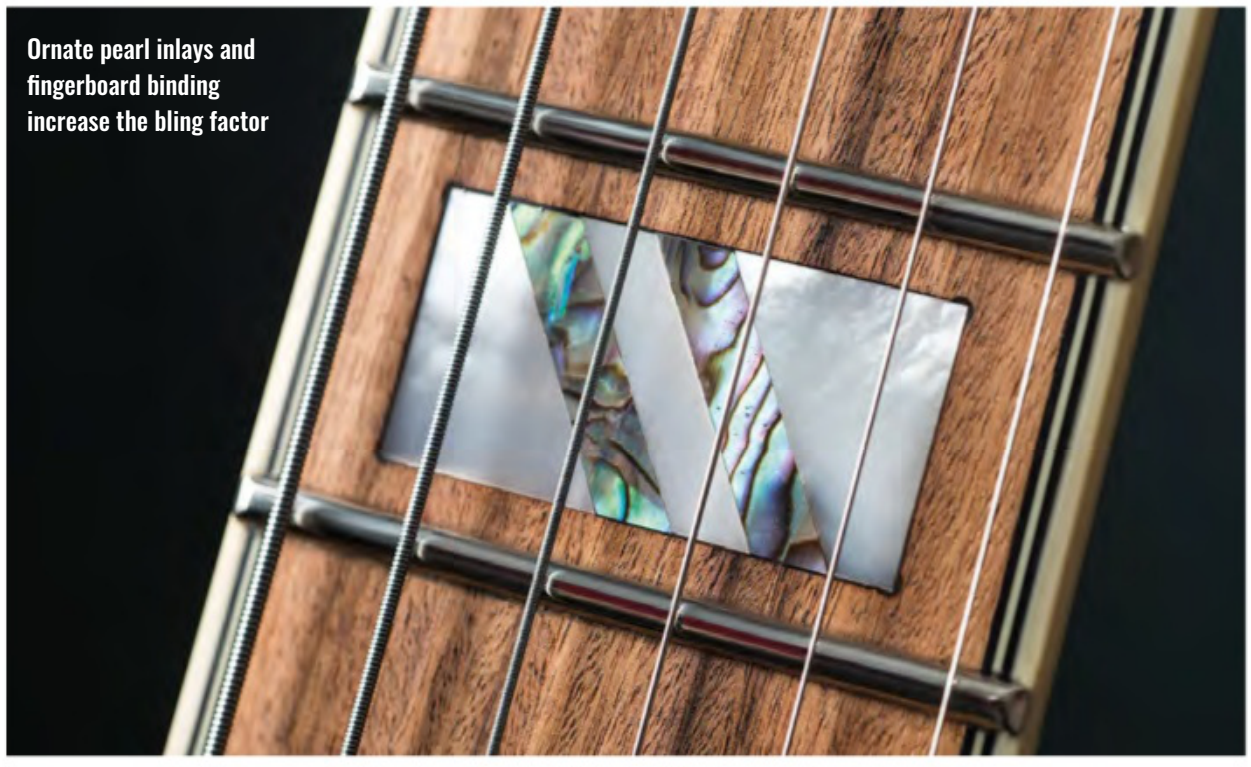
IN USE

Plugging into a small tweed amp with a hint of reverb reveals a beautiful, smooth voice from the Seymour Duncan DA-59 Humbuckers. The neck pickup is warm and inviting – it's an excellent solo tone for rock and blues with enough articulation for bebop and fusion, too.

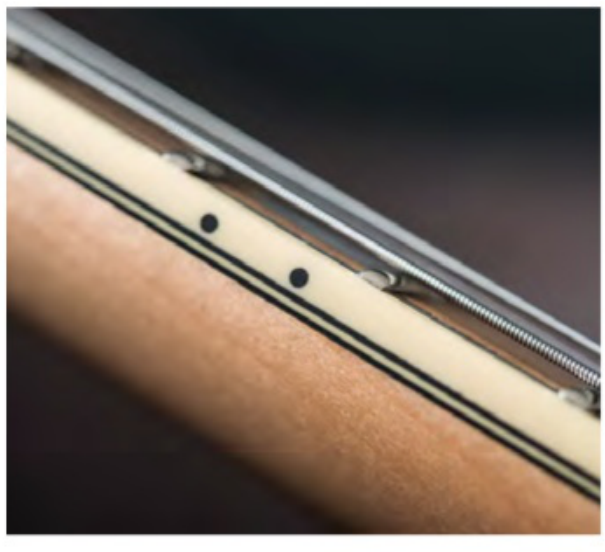
Flipping to the bridge pickup unleashes some serious midrange grunt, more LP than SG, which encourages expressive vibrato and big bends – something which works beautifully on the 14-inch radius fretboard.

The in-between tones are springy and detailed. Both pickups also feature coil-

The versatile Seymour Duncan DA-59 humbuckers kick out both smooth and raucous tones



Ornate pearl inlays and fingerboard binding increase the bling factor



splits via push/pull tone controls and the single-coil sound is good, despite the inevitable drop in volume.

Applying a Tube Screamer-style drive brings about an immediate shift in personality, with the guitar switching from smooth-talking jazz machine to shouty rocker. The aesthetic may not scream rock 'n' roll, but the available sounds certainly can, with sophisticated clean tones translating into expressive and punchy distorted textures. The neck pickup loses a little clarity as you dial up the gain, but the bridge pickup is capable of some excellent lead voices, maintaining punch and aggression throughout.

Despite the brand's archtop origins, the D'Angelico Deluxe Brighton is a very capable and versatile solidbody electric. Like a supermodel in steel toecaps, this deco-flavoured instrument has hidden reserves of grit and belligerence for players of all genres. G

KEY FEATURES

PRICE £1,169 (inc. hard case)
DESCRIPTION 6-string solidbody electric guitar, made in Korea
BUILD Swamp ash body, satin-finished C-shape 'set thru' maple neck, 14" radius pau ferro fretboard, 22 medium frets, Tusq nut, dual-action truss-rod
ELECTRONICS 2x Seymour Duncan DA-25 humbuckers, 2x volume, 2x tone (pull for coil-split), 3-way toggle pickup selector switch
HARDWARE Grover Super Rotomatic locking machineheads, tune-o-matic bridge and stop tailpiece
SCALE LENGTH 24.75"/629mm
NECK WIDTH 42.8mm at nut, 53mm at 12th fret
NECK DEPTH 20mm at 1st fret, 22mm at 12th fret
STRING SPACING 37mm at nut, 50mm at bridge
WEIGHT 4.8kg/10.6lb
LEFT-HANDERS No
FINISH Hunter Green (as reviewed), Steel Blue, Black, Natural Swamp Ash gloss polyurethane
CONTACT dangelicoguitars.com

8/10 **Not just for smooth grooves and jazz conversations, this smart solidbody can rock, too**

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

PRS S2 Vela **£1,449**, Duesenberg Bonneville **£1,479**, Yamaha Revstar RSP20CR **£1,189**

INFINITE CREATIVITY

STUNNING AUDIO

30 MIN LOOPER · SYNTH · TONE CAPTURE · 108 PREAMPS · 164 EFFECTS · IR LOADER · MIDI · AUDIO · 3DSP

MOOER

EFFECTS AND AMPLIFICATION

mooeraudio.com

THE REBIRTH OF AN ICON

The golden-era archtop guitars made by John D'Angelico remain some of the most beautiful and ornate instruments ever made, but in the last decade, the company that bears his name has been reborn as a thoroughly modern guitar brand…

WORDS JOSH GARDNER

In 1932, John D'Angelico started making guitars in a workshop in New York, and over the following decades, he would earn a reputation for making some of the finest and most ornate archtop guitars of the era. The company entered a troubled time after D'Angelico's death in 1964 at the age of just 59, and while his apprentice Jimmy D'Aquisto kept hand-building guitars in the way he was taught, the brand would soon join the ranks of great guitar names lost to history.

But then in 2011, the brand returned under the stewardship of its new owners, Brenden Cohen, and John Ferolito Jr, with a plan to shake up the guitar industry. Once again people could enjoy the unique Art Deco charms of D'Angelico guitars.

A SENSE OF HISTORY

"Inheriting the brand and legacy of John D'Angelico comes with a responsibility that is not lost on us," says Ryan Kershaw, D'Angelico's Vice President, Product Development & Artist Relations, of how the modern company regards its famous founder.

"We feel extremely fortunate to be connected to one of the greatest luthiers of all time, and his spirit informs nearly all of our actions. We take painstaking

measures to recreate a lot of his original designs, always imbue new products with his aesthetics, and are rooted in an understanding of how magical his original instruments are. His legacy is legend, and we take great pride in carrying it on."

One of the most notable developments of the new range was that the guitars were primarily made in Asia – something that certainly wasn't the case when D'Angelico was hand-building guitars in his workshop in 40 Kenmare Street, but something borne from a desire to make these unique instruments more accessible for a broader audience.

"We have heard so many of the world's greatest players say something like, 'My whole life, I've always wanted to own a D'Angelico'. Or, 'When I was young, a D'Angelico was like an untouchable Cadillac'," Kershaw reflects. "We have always prioritised being able to offer these instruments for an affordable price because simply put, everyone should get to play one."

Mass-production comes with its own issues, however, and to ensure that these guitars live up to the standards that John D'Angelico set in the golden era, the company has left no stone unturned.

"Our greatest challenge was getting the cost of the guitars down while maintaining the quality of the brand name," Kershaw admits. "We've scanned original D'Angelico's with MRI machines, scoured history books for details, spoken with restoration masters, and work exclusively with the best overseas factories, with whom we maintain close relationships. We never want our customers to have to 'find a good one'. Since our product overhaul in 2017, we've never been more confident in our ability to provide a quality affordable instrument to our customers."

SOLID SOUL

One of the most notable developments since the company announced the aforementioned range-wide overhaul was the introduction of the brand's first-ever solidbody guitars – a serious departure from the archtop recipe – including the Brighton (as reviewed on previous pages) and the new offset Bedford.

"At first, leaning into our jazz guitar lineage was extremely important. We wanted to make sure that the players who knew of John D'Angelico's legacy were going to be rewarded with an exceptionally well-built instrument that was deeply inspired by the originals," Kershaw explains. "While we still very much maintain that part of our product line, it became important early on to venture into uncharted territory. Developing the solidbody line was a massive opportunity and one of the most fun projects I have worked on. We knew that we had to make our foray into that world, and we knew that we were up for a huge challenge. We wanted to have a relatively diverse set of instruments, all of which would look and feel like a part of the D'Angelico family."

As much as archtops are enjoying something of a renaissance of late, a major part of D'Angelico's resurgence has been about engaging with new artists and getting the brand's instruments in their hands. Key to this has been online tuition portal Pickup Music, through whom D'Angelico has become involved with some of the hottest names in the online guitar scene.

"Pickup Music and the emerging online community of guitar players has been a huge benefit to our entire industry," Kershaw enthuses. "It's been extremely fun and beneficial to work with artists like Isaiah Sharkey, Melanie Faye, Curt Henderson, among others. We've also developed the Emerging Artist Fund with Pickup Music, in which we give away guitars and live performance opportunities to new artists coming up through the online community of guitar players – we're extremely proud to be able to support young players in that way and will continue to do so."

NEW YORK STATE OF MIND

It's clear that D'Angelico in 2019 has evolved into a very different beast to the one that began in a small workshop in Little Italy nine decades ago, but the spirit of the great city with which it's indelibly linked is a vital part of the company today.

"We want our instruments to represent everything from New York City's astonishing beauty to its grit and grime," Kershaw tells us. "You can see the history of our brand across our product line, and that history can never be divorced from New York. We wouldn't make sense anywhere else.

"The Bedford is named after the street I was living on in Brooklyn when we developed that guitar. From the early days when John D'Angelico had his tiny shop on Kenmare Street in the Lower East Side to this week when we tested out our new 40s-inspired archtop in our Manhattan showroom, D'Angelico *is* New York City, and it inspires us every day." G

For more information, visit dangelicoguitars.com

ABOVE The new solidbody D'Angelico Bedford, as played by Dead & Company's Bob Weir

OPPOSITE 1949 and 2019 D'Angelicos side by side

HARMONY
STANDARD SERIES JUPITER & REBEL

WORDS DAVE HUNTER

Reviving a beloved vintage brand with a high cool-per-quid quotient, the new Harmony line's retro-modern marriage delivers some surprisingly upmarket features

Through the 1950s and 60s and into the 70s, while manufacturing more instruments than any other maker on the planet, Chicago-based Harmony cranked out several affordable models that suited not only beginners, but everyone from punks to bluesers to grunge-y garage-rockers as well. Soon after, though, the brand slipped its American moorings to be bounced around through several owners, before fading from the market entirely.

Now under the ownership of BandLab Technologies – which has also acquired Teisco, Mono, *Guitar.com* and *Guitar Magazine*, and is a partner of Heritage Guitars – the three models in the new Harmony Standard Series line-up are manufactured back in the USA at 225 Parsons Street in Kalamazoo, Michigan. It's an address redolent of guitar-world nostalgia as the original and golden-age home of Gibson.

From the débutante trio of Jupiter, Rebel and Silhouette, we have the former two for review here. The many similarities between these two bolt-neck solidbodies mean we can cover most of the common specifications in the first go-round with the Jupiter, while following up to touch upon the Rebel's individuality in some detail.

While these Harmony models carry names from originals of the 60s, they're certainly not slavish recreations of such. Body lines pay homage to their namesakes, for sure, and other cleverly stylish touches tie in the aesthetics across the 50-plus-year chasm, but each guitar is a thorough reimagining of its predecessor, encapsulating a dollop of the catalogue cool of the original, while rendering the whole as a roadworthy, toneful, and supremely playable pro-stage-capable electric guitar circa 2020.

JUPITER RISING

It would be easy to label this single-cutaway entrant as the 50s LP Special of the line-up, if we were looking for classic touchstones (which might lead us to call the Rebel the SG and the Silhouette the Firebird), but this Harmony model is quite different from the Gibson workhorse that was once manufactured in the same premises. Like its siblings, the Jupiter is a 25-inch scale-length guitar, making it a little longer than the originals, with both body and neck carved from solid mahogany and joined together with three wood screws in recessed cups.

The Jupiter's Gold Foil humbuckers will garner plenty of attention

Like the Jupiter, the Rebel features a bolt-on mahogany neck but no contoured heel

The body has both forearm and ribcage contours for enhanced ergonomics and sits comfortably, both on the lap and the strap.

The neck is carved to a medium 'C' profile in an acknowledged bid to appeal to a wide range of playing tastes, with a contoured heel carve that eases upper-fret access. Its natural finish reveals an appealing grain, while the 1 11/16-inch width across the bone nut and 12-inch curve of the unbound ebony fingerboard leave plenty of room to explore the 22 well-dressed medium-jumbo frets.

Clearly fresh off the line, the Jupiter emerged from its Mono Vertigo gigbag – included, and a significant bonus – still perfumed with the heady nitrocellulose finish with which it was sprayed (so much so, we were likely a little dizzy while typing this). Our review sample sports the Champagne finish, one among three options completed by less dazzling black and white, with white cupcake control knobs and white three-ply pickguard. All in all, it's beautifully executed.

Hardware includes a chopped-T-style bridge with through-body stringing across compensated steel saddles and three-a-side OEM locking tuners. The pickups will garner the most attention, though: USA-made Gold Foil humbuckers, designed to capture the spirit of the original single-coil DeArmond Gold Foils of the '60s, but without the hum or microphony. Measuring about 7.42k ohms DC in both positions, they are wired through a three-way toggle selector, with shared volume and tones.

REBEL ROUSER

The Rebel is the same in all aspects other than the double-cutaway body and the six-in-line headstock, along with the few necessities of design and appointments that accompany those changes. The lower bout is precisely the same as the Jupiter's, but the upper bout flares out a bit wider just after the waist to allow for the broad dual-horned spread. Our review example (there are, again, two other finishes available) comes in Harmony's Burgundy finish, though we'd amend this luscious deep-red hue to 'Atomic Reactor Raspberry'.

Despite being 97.3 per cent the same as its sibling, the Rebel has a somewhat different playing feel, particularly when strapped on. The location of the forward strap button behind the upper horn shifts the entire playing position further leftward of the guitarist, requiring more left-arm extension, and also inducing some neck-dive when you lift away that hand. Lacking the Jupiter's contoured heel (clearly deemed unnecessary), this deep double-cut design doesn't really offer any better top-fret access than its sibling. The Rebel's other distinguishing characteristics reveal themselves in the playing, so let's dive in.

IN USE

The Jupiter is a comfortable guitar in the hands and the neck shape is easy to like, although we do find the transitional edge from the rounded-'C' back profile over to the fingerboard to be a *tad* sharp, if not off-puttingly so (some rolled edges would have helped a lot there). The guitar arrived with a confident low-action setup and both fretting and bending are a breeze.

Tested through a Friedman Small Box head and a 2x12 Germino cab with Celestion Greenbacks and a tweed Deluxe-style 1x12 combo, plus a selection of overdrive pedals, the Jupiter reveals an original and characterful voice that nevertheless applies easily to a surprisingly broad range of styles. Through it all, the guitar's core has the snappy, vaguely funky response of a bolt-neck guitar with a flat neck angle, but the mahogany construction

and Gold Foil humbuckers take that foundation well out of Fender-ville.

Somewhat to our surprise, given our experience with vintage Gold Foils, the Jupiter's sonic personality is predominantly warm and rounded, with a smooth, balanced thickness and less of the lively sparkle and chime we might have expected from this pairing of build and electronics.

On the bridge pickup, when played clean, that still translates to appealingly jangly arpeggios and fluid single-note runs that are utterly devoid of spikiness, though not much adept at country twang either, if you lean that way. The selector's middle position scoops and lightens up the tone somewhat and is extremely appealing at that, while the neck pickup alone is unexpectedly adept at buoyant jazz excursions, as well as rich blues tones. Note that these aren't particularly punchy humbuckers – they don't push either amp's front end much, so everything stays clean pretty far up on the dial.

Through either the Friedman's gained-up lead channel or a Wampler Tumnus Deluxe or Tsakalis Six overdrive inserted in front of the tweedy combo, the Jupiter exudes creamy, vocal-like lead tones which do exhibit just a bit of bitey, snarky, 60s Gold Foil character around the edges, but are otherwise surprisingly elegant and refined, though still adept at rocking pretty hard. Rather than the nasty, garage-y disposition of its vintage namesake, this Harmony is a semi-polite and surprisingly sophisticated performer and lots of fun in the process.

Similarly amped up, the Rebel throws out a few surprises, given its family resemblance to the Jupiter. In short, while core characteristics are broadly similar, this one displays more of the slightly raw, granular snarl that we expect to hear from Gold Foil-inspired pickups, which to our ears makes it a somewhat more compelling indie- and alt-rock warrior in the process.

A quick check reveals readings of 7.62k ohms from both units, which is a little hotter than the pickups loaded into the Jupiter (we suspect randomly so, since it's no major disparity), but that shouldn't be enough to account for the enhanced aggression and noticeably extra push of clean amp settings into early breakup.

Either way, the Rebel lives up to its name in an aggressive, overtly attitudinal performance that helps to compensate for its shifted playing position and occasional neck-dive. G

KEY FEATURES

HARMONY STANDARD SERIES JUPITER
PRICE £1,049 (inc. Mono Vertigo gigbag)
DESCRIPTION Single-cutaway solidbody bolt-neck electric guitar. Made in USA
BUILD Solid mahogany body, screwed-on mahogany neck with medium-'C' profile, 12"-radius ebony fingerboard, 22x medium-jumbo frets, single-action truss rod, bone nut
HARDWARE Proprietary half-T-style through-strung bridge with compensated steel saddles, sealed locking tuners
ELECTRICS 2x custom USA-made Gold Foil humbuckers, master volume and tone with orange drop tone capacitor, 3-way toggle pickup selector
SCALE LENGTH 25"/635mm
NECK WIDTH 42.8mm at nut, 50.8mm at 12th fret
NECK DEPTH 21.4mm at first fret, 24.6mm at 12th fret
STRING SPACING 36.5mm at nut, 54.0mm at bridge
WEIGHT 3.4kg/7.5lb
LEFT-HANDERS No
FINISH Champagne nitrocellulose (as reviewed), Pearl White, Space Black

8/10 **A thoughtful reworking of the original's raw character, while upping the overall quality and elegance**

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

Supro 1296 Silverwood **£1,049**, Patrick James Eggle Macon Junior **£2,800**, Gibson Les Paul Special **£1,299**

KEY FEATURES

HARMONY STANDARD SERIES REBEL
PRICE £1,049 (inc. Mono Vertigo gigbag)
DESCRIPTION Double-cutaway solidbody bolt-neck electric guitar. Made in USA
BUILD Solid mahogany body, screwed-on mahogany neck with medium-'C' profile, 12"-radius ebony fingerboard, 22x medium-jumbo frets, single-action truss-rod, bone nut
HARDWARE Proprietary half-T-style through-strung bridge with compensated steel saddles, sealed locking tuners
ELECTRICS 2x custom USA-made Gold Foil humbuckers, master volume and tone with orange drop tone capacitor, 3-way toggle pickup selector
SCALE LENGTH 25"/635mm
NECK WIDTH 42.8mm at nut, 50.8mm at 12th fret
NECK DEPTH 21.4mm at first fret, 24.6mm at 12th fret
STRING SPACING 36.5mm at nut, 54.0mm at bridge
WEIGHT 3.28kg/7.25lb
LEFT-HANDERS No
FINISH Burgundy nitrocellulose (as reviewed), Champagne, Pearl White
CONTACT Westside Distribution
westsidedistribution.com, harmony.co

8/10 **An impressive modern revamp that offers an appealingly garage-y sonic personality**

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

Supro 1296 Silverwood **£1,049**, Gibson SG Tribute **£899**, Patrick James Eggle Macon Junior **£2,800**

MONOCREATORS.COM/PFX

ELEVATE YOUR PERFORMANCE

DESIGN THE PERFECT SETUP.
MONO pedalboards, risers and accessories combine to keep your setup neat and sleek, for absolute pedal access with no distractions from your music.

Follow us
@MONOCREATORS

mono

AUDEN
AUDEN

Solid wood binding and purfling, rather than plastic, features throughout

AUDEN
ARTIST MAHOGANY JULIA & ARTIST ROSEWOOD JULIA

WORDS MICHAEL WATTS

Auden's popular singer-songwriter-inspired 00 model comes in two distinct flavours, but which should you buy?

No longer newcomers to the acoustic scene, Auden Guitars offers reasonably-priced acoustic instruments for players looking for something other than the big USA names. With a loyal artist roster – endorsers include The Alarm's Mike Peters and Marillion's Steve Rothery – and a reputation for sound quality, Auden's range covers a wide variety of body sizes and wood combinations. For this review, we have the Julia. This is a smaller-body guitar that Auden has designed with the singer-songwriter in mind, and it comes in two flavours: rosewood and cedar and mahogany and Sitka spruce.

Auden describes the Julia as a 00, which makes sense given its 14.25-inch lower bout, but the rounded, non-cutaway body is closer to a classical guitar outline than anything leaving Nazareth. The 14-fret neck-to-body join and longer 655mm (25.75") scale length also set the design apart. Incidentally, the Julia is also available as a nylon-string model.

Both review guitars have an elegant simplicity, which serves to showcase the beauty of the natural materials used – solid wood binding and purfling, rather than plastic, features throughout. The Schertler 18:1 open back machine heads look the part, although they're not always the most responsive. Both guitars come stage-ready with Brad Clark Supernatural active pickup systems, soundhole-mounted control systems and strap buttons fitted as standard.

The satin-finished African mahogany neck is carved with a gentle C shape. It's a little slim for intricate fingerstyle but comfortable enough in the first position. Moving barre chords up and down the neck is smooth work, even for players with smaller hands. The fretwork is uniformly good with well-rounded ends, and while there is some finish overspray near the neck join, that is indicative of a glued-in dovetail joint constructed prior to finishing.

The Julia is very comfortable to play both seated and standing, and from the singer-songwriter's point of view the smaller body works beautifully.

Large body guitars can feel restrictive for singers, as reaching over a bigger body can hamper breathing control and expression. That won't be a problem here! The smooth gloss finish on both instruments also makes the guitars a pleasure to work with when mic'd in the studio, with no extraneous noises and body rubs.

MAHOGANY MOODS

African mahogany has become a catch-all label for a variety of different woods including Sapele and Sipo. In this case we are dealing with a handsome set of Khaya with its characteristic grain stripes accentuated by a dark pore-filler. While this wood has been a popular choice for budget instruments over the years, it is an excellent tonewood in the right hands and shouldn't be seen as a compromise. That said, any player expecting the rich warmth of a true mahogany guitar may need to adjust their sights, and budget, accordingly.

The AAA grade Sitka spruce top is a pleasing example, with some dark winter growth lines adding character. It looks good together with the Macassar ebony bridge while the abalone rosette gives the guitar a touch of more traditional ornamentation.

The first strummed open position chords on the Mahogany Julia reveal a midrange heavy, dry and snappy character which is pretty sensational for blues and Americana textures. Players used to a more conventional scale length may find that bends and vibrato demand a little more from the fretting hand, but the guitar really does encourage you to dig in with the Sitka top providing more than enough headroom.

Moving into DADGAD we find ourselves squarely in UK folk revival territory, with the mahogany Julia coming close to the woody voice of a vintage Fylde. The bass growls when you hit it just right and while the trebles are a little raw right out of the

box, there is every reason to expect them to smooth off as the instrument matures.

ROSEWOOD RESPONSE

Rosewood and cedar is another established wood combination, especially among fingerstyle players, and it certainly makes sense to offer these woods as an alternative voice to Mahogany and Spruce. The Indian rosewood used for the back and sides of this second Julia model is straight-grained and beautifully dark, while the cedar top is accentuated with a simple but elegant rosewood rosette.

The tonal personality of the Rosewood Julia is smoother and more refined than its mahogany sister. There's a breathy openness to chord work, especially with a lighter pick, and while it may not have the headroom of a spruce guitar, there's enough volume to accompany vocals unplugged. It's particularly effective in pop and R&B contexts.

Exploring open tunings confirms our initial impression that the Rosewood Julia offers a more modern personality than its sibling, with a sheen and immediacy to the trebles that make it a worthy companion for Antoine Dufour-inspired solo playing as well as James Taylor-style vocal accompaniment. In fact, it excels in any context where nuance and space are key.

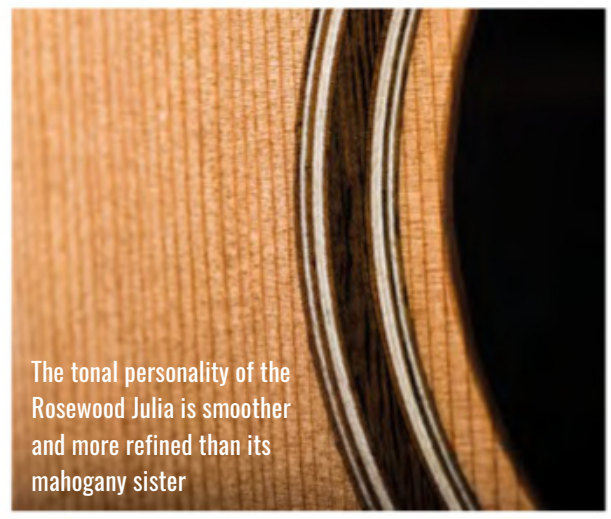
SWITCHED ON

The aforementioned Brad Clarke Supernatural twin sensor active pickup system features a powerful soundhole-mounted EQ, with additional programmed presets for Thick Strum, Finger Pick, Solo and Thin Strum voices. The preamp sliders are a little fiddly to get around but in most instances we suspect they'll be 'set and forget', without the need for much manipulation during performance.

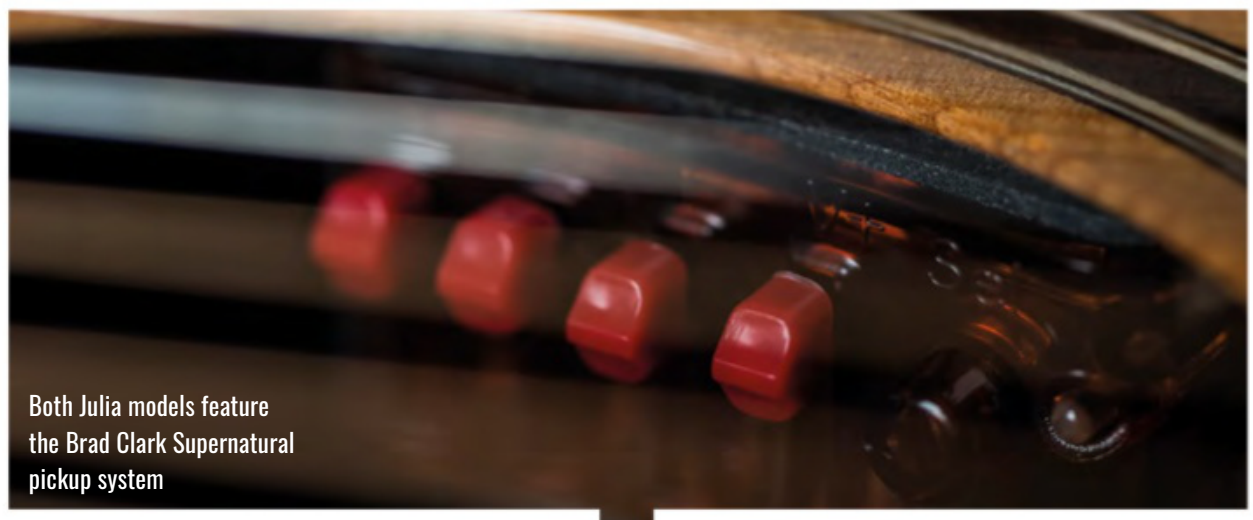
The electric sound quality is good, translating the acoustic performance of both instruments into a lively, detailed plugged-in tone. The smaller body of the Julia also makes both guitars impressively resistant to feeding back. Auden ships its guitars with a composite saddle, which transfers energy into the pickup more effectively. If you're planning to play predominantly unplugged, you'll find a beautifully cut bone saddle in the pocket of the sturdy buckskin case, along with an invitation to visit the Auden workshop. That's a really nice touch.

Our time with both flavours of the Artist Julia certainly supports Auden's recommendation of the guitar not only for singers but also for those guitarists who support vocalists on stage and in the studio. These are sweet-sounding instruments that have the dynamic and tonal range to bring a song to life.

The Mahogany Julia has a heavy, dry and snappy character, which is pretty sensational for blues and Americana textures



The tonal personality of the Rosewood Julia is smoother and more refined than its mahogany sister



Both Julia models feature the Brad Clark Supernatural pickup system

KEY FEATURES

Auden Artist Mahogany Julia
PRICE £1,299 (inc. hard case)
DESCRIPTION All-solid-wood electro-acoustic guitar. Assembled in the UK
BUILD African mahogany back and sides, AAA Sitka spruce top, ebony bridge, African mahogany neck, ebony fingerboard, maple binding, maple and mahogany purfling, abalone rosette, bone nut, composite saddle (bone alternative supplied), Schertler 18:1 open-gear tuners
ELECTRONICS Brad Clark Supernatural pickup system
SCALE LENGTH 655mm/25.75"
NECK WIDTH 43mm at nut, 54mm at 12th fret
NECK DEPTH 20mm at first fret, 22mm at 7th fret
STRING SPACING 38mm at nut, 54mm at bridge 0
WEIGHT 1.7kg/3.8lb
LEFT-HANDERS Yes
FINISH Gloss

8/10 **A snappy, woody blues and Americana machine with plenty of headroom**

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

Taylor 314ce V-Class Sapele Sitka **£1,849,** Martin 000-15 Special Spruce Top **£1,450**, Eastman E20 OM **£1,459**

KEY FEATURES

Auden Artist Rosewood Julia
PRICE £1,499 (inc. hard case)
DESCRIPTION All-solid-wood electro-acoustic guitar. Assembled in the UK
BUILD Indian rosewood back and sides, AAA cedar top, ebony bridge, African mahogany neck, ebony fingerboard, maple and rosewood purfling and rosette, bone nut, composite saddle (Bone alternative supplied) Schertler 18:1 open tuners
ELECTRONICS Brad Clark Supernatural pickup system
SCALE LENGTH 655mm/25.75"
NECK WIDTH 43mm at nut, 54mm at 12th fret
NECK DEPTH 20mm at 1st fret, 22mm at 7th fret
STRING SPACING 38mm at nut, 54mm at bridge
WEIGHT 1.8kg/4.0lb
LEFT-HANDERS Yes
FINISH Gloss
CONTACT audenguitars.com

8/10 **A soft-spoken and sophisticated Cedar serenader ideal for contemporary styles**

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

Taylor 414ce-R Rosewood **£1,999**, Lakewood M 32 **£2,095**, Martin OM-21 **£2,450**

GS414B PLUS

HERCULES®

The AGS **PLUS** Series...
EXPONENTIALLY BETTER

+ MORE ADAPTABLE + ENHANCED STABILITY + SMOOTHER ADJUSTMENT

IT ALL ADDS UP TO TRUST.

HERCULESSTANDS.COM

THE STORY OF AUDEN

From the very start, Auden Guitars sought to develop an innovative approach to making quality hand-built instruments that won't break the bank. Auden kingpin Doug Sparkes shares the story of this transcontinental brand…

WORDS JOSH GARDNER **PHOTOGRAPHY** JOE SUPPLE

Driving down a quiet residential street in a quiet market town in Northamptonshire, you might not expect to come across the biggest new name in UK acoustic guitar making, but breathing new life into the old red-brick co-operative society building at the corner of a leafy road in Higham Ferrers sits the headquarters of Auden Guitars.

Stepping inside the large wooden doors, however, and you're instantly transported from quiet suburbia into the hustle and bustle of a luthier's workshop – workbenches are set up with instruments in various stages of assembly on one side, down the corridor a team of young luthiers are hard at work shaping necks, sanding tops and setting frets, while in between a brand new spraying room is stacked with brightly coloured Gordon Smith electrics (Auden bought the iconic UK brand a few years back and builds guitars under that banner here, too).

It's a remarkable thing to find in this unassuming corner of England, and yet it feels like an appropriate setting for a guitar company that has always tried to do things a little differently. At the heart of everything is Doug Sparkes – the man who started Auden alongside head luthier Rob Bowman, and has overseen its rise to prominence. But how did we get here?

"Well, I'd been playing guitar in the same band for 25 years, but I had a business in a completely different industry completely unrelated to guitars," Doug explains over a coffee in his office, at the far end of the workshop. "Then I made a decision to sell a business, and in the process of that, I found myself in Shanghai over a weekend, holed up in a hotel. And I was just miserable just thinking 'What am I going to do? I've done all the touristy stuff!'

"Then, into the hotel bar walked two Western guys carrying guitars. I was obviously interested in what they're doing in China, so I decided to talk to them and find out. It turned out they were actually going to Music China. I immediately thought, 'I'll blag my way into the show, and I'll spend my weekend looking at guitars! But by the end of the weekend, I've got this seed planted in my head that my next venture was going to be something to do with musical instruments."

THE BOWMAN COMETH

The seed might have been planted, but Doug didn't have the technical expertise to make the dream a reality. That was until an encounter with a session player when he was making a record with his band…

"We were doing some recording and we wanted a banjo part on a particular track," Doug picks up. "We were introduced to this guy called Rob Bowman, who is a session banjo player. And so he came in to play

with us, but during the session, he noticed the state of my 25-year-old Takamine that I was using – it was beaten to hell, had a hole in the top… the bracings were falling out… it was completely wrecked!

"Rob looked at it and said, 'Why don't I try and fix this up for you?'" When it came back "better than new" a friendship was formed.

"The next thing I knew, I'm sat in his lounge saying, 'Rob, I want to take you to Asia with me for a month. And we're going to go around all these guitar factories, and see if we can find a really great product. And if we can, then we might have a new career!'"

That potential 'new career' had been inspired by Doug's entrepreneurial brain putting together the impressive level of instrument-building that he'd seen on the Music China show floor with the dearth of mid-priced instruments that offered genuine bang for buck.

"And I thought well, is there an opportunity here?" Doug recalls. "Has guitar building in Asia developed enough to enable us to get a really good quality product, and still make it reasonably priced? I wanted the best materials and the best hand-built skills and craftsmanship, but I wanted a guitar that was affordable."

CHINA CRISIS

With a plan in action in place, Sparkes and Bowman spent a month travelling around China visiting factories that produced instruments for brands big and small both in Asia and in the US, but came away concerned that they couldn't find what they were looking for.

"We went round over probably 30 different factories, and towards the end of it I was getting really disheartened because nobody was doing what we wanted," he recalls. "Then, near the end of the trip we met with an ex-Gibson luthier who was living in China, and he said, 'Look, there's one factory you should go and see,' in a town called Haizhu, which is just outside Guangzhou, in the south of China. So we went over to have a look around and it was by far the best factory we saw on the trip, but it still wasn't quite what we wanted. It wasn't a hand-built, luthier-built.

"So we went out for dinner with the guy in charge, and I explained to him, 'It's really the best factory we've seen, congratulations on what you're doing. But it's not quite what we want. What we really want is somebody that can handle the woodwork in the traditional way'. And he said, 'Well look, we've just moved into this new factory and we own the building opposite as well. So if you're serious about it, I'll set up a hand-built workshop for you. But you need to write an order out.'

"So he really called my bluff! As I sat there and you know, as the second bottle of wine came out, the pen came out and the order was signed and we're committed to the first orders being made."

NEW AUDEN

In the years since, Auden has evolved and grown into exactly what Doug envisioned it being – a British company that takes advantage of Asian production to produce hand-built instruments of high quality that slot comfortably into the £1,000-£2,000 price bracket. The brand now sports eight different models available at several different price points, and there's even a custom shop for special orders – but it all grew from that chance encounter in Shanghai.

"It's the same team of nine luthiers in that workshop, building the very first Audens, that are still making all the orders now," Doug adds, proudly.

The way Auden assembles its instruments means much of the raw woodworking is done in China, while the UK team – most of whom Bowman brought on as apprentices, effectively training up a new generation of young luthiers – handles the details.

"They build the wooden shell, and that comes over to the UK – so the neck is attached but it's not set, there's no tension on the truss rod," Sparkes explains of the process.

"So we'll do the setting of the neck here. The frets are in, but they're not dressed, crowned or polished – so we do all that work here. The hardware goes on, the tuners go on, we fit the electronics, the Brad Clark Supernatural system is fitted, and we custom-make a saddle to go with the pickup for each guitar. It's given its final buffing polish on the wheel here, and then it's set up ready to go out to market."

Another unique thing about Auden is that if you fancy popping into the workshop and seeing Bowman and his team at work, you can. Simply give them a call and pay the team a visit in Higham Ferrers: as Doug says, Auden's doors are always open.

For more information visit audenguitars.com

ABOVE Fretwork gets some attention in the Northamptonshire workshop

OPPOSITE Auden's Doug Sparkes with an electric guitar from Gordon Smith, Auden's sister brand

OPPOSITE BELOW The Auden brand combines fundamental Chinese production and UK finishing expertise side by side

FENDER
TONE MASTER DELUXE REVERB & TWIN REVERB

Guitar EDITOR'S CHOICE

WORDS ED OLESZKO

Promising classic Blackface tones, impulse response direct outputs, handy switchable power options and around a 50 per cent reduction in weight, does Fender's Tone Master series spell the end for the humble valve amp?

The Deluxe has been a staple of the Fender amplifier line in various guises since its humble 'Woody' origins on the workbench of Leo Fender and Doc Kauffman in the 1940s. The Twin followed soon after, with both models subsequently appearing in tweed, brown, blonde, black and silver livery and becoming two of the most prominent and iconic amplifiers in popular music history.

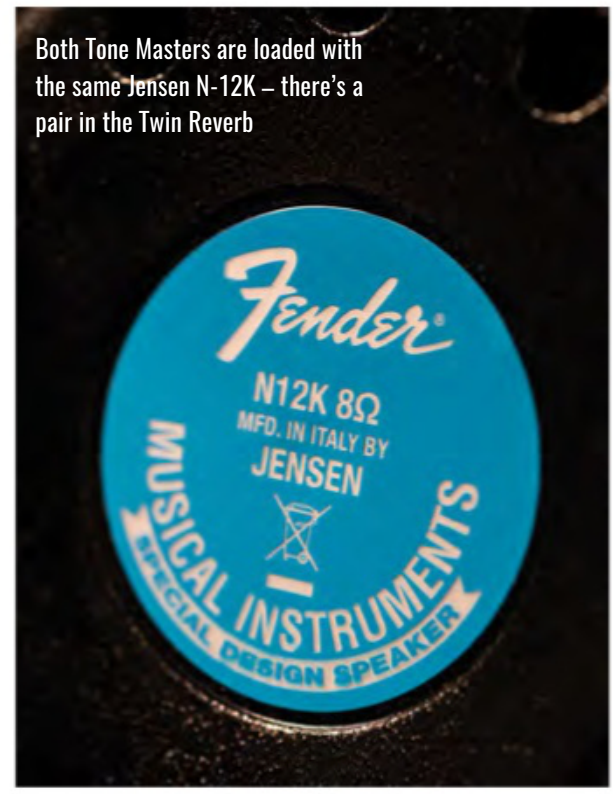
The iconic 5E3 and later ZZ Top-approved brown 6G3 Deluxe have loyal followings, while the tweed Twin is the stage amp of choice for Keith Richards and Joe Bonamassa. But ask most guitarists to describe the generic tone of a Fender Twin or Deluxe and the chances are it's the tone of the classic 1960s Blackface model they'll be talking about. And if it's those tones you're looking for, vintage enthusiasts are well catered for by the current Fender catalogue. But what if there was a way to get the classic Deluxe Reverb and Twin Reverb experience without the associated weight and volume, at a more affordable price point? According to Fender, that's where the new Tone Master amps come in.

Not to be confused with the Bruce Zinky-designed 100-watt Custom Shop head of the same name from the 1990s, 2019's Tone Masters couple the latest digital processing with hefty solid-state power sections in lightweight and resonant pine cabinets that house neodymium Jensen N-12K speakers. And if you've been put off in the past by digital amps resembling C-3P0's toolbox, you'll be pleased to see there's not a multifunction rotary control or sub-menu push button in sight.

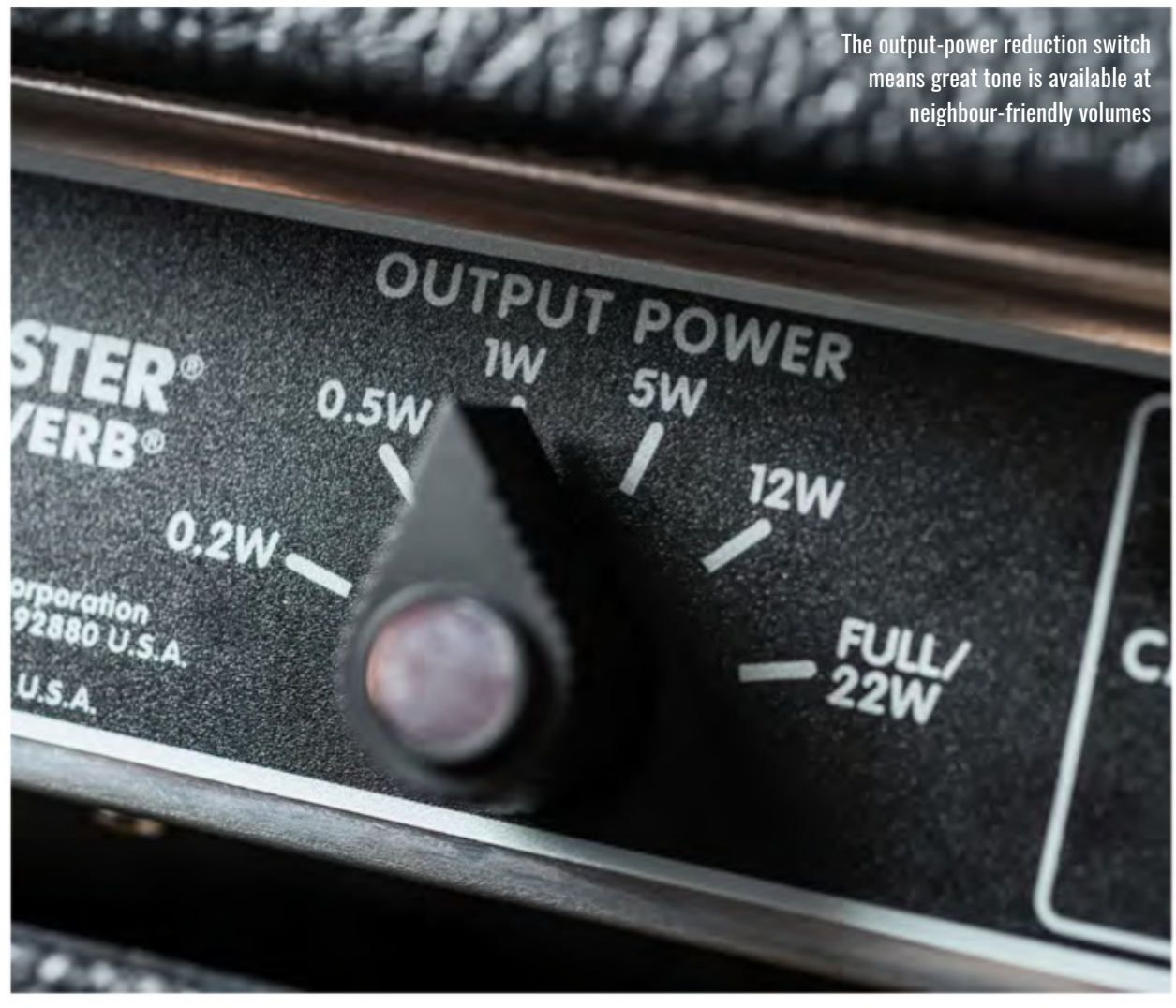
Instead, despite the Tone Masters' modern digital brains, Fender has produced a modern Deluxe Reverb and Twin Reverb that look *almost* exactly like their vintage counterparts, with Blackface control panels sporting the historically correct dual-channel configurations. Each channel has two inputs, with the simple volume, bass and treble of the Deluxe Reverb's channels augmented by bright switches and middle controls on the Twin.

Both amplifiers have a single control for reverb, along with speed and intensity for tremolo. So far, so familiar, then – in fact if you have difficulty working these control panels out then it really might be time to pick up those drumsticks.

The refined approach continues around the back of each and, although this is where some of the modern tech starts to make its presence felt, it's all very straightforward. Both rear panels feature a six-position output power switch which delivers stepped attenuation from stage volumes down to bedroom levels. There's also a balanced XLR direct out with a level control and a three-position cabinet simulation switch, which offers two preset impulse response profiles that model dynamic and ribbon mic'd cabinets in addition to a flat, uncoloured signal with no cabinet emulation.



Both Tone Masters are loaded with the same Jensen N-12K – there's a pair in the Twin Reverb



The output-power reduction switch means great tone is available at neighbour-friendly volumes

Interestingly, despite the maximum power setting on the back panels of both amplifiers being labelled as a vintage-correct 22 and 85-watts respectively, in order to simulate the punch of a valve power-amp, the Tone Master Deluxe Reverb delivers 100-watts into eight ohms and the Twin Reverb 200-watts into four ohms.

IN USE

Over the years, vintage Deluxe Reverbs have attained near mythical status as the perfect portable club/recording amp, punching well above their size. We put the Tone Master up against an original 1965 model and plug in with an old Strat and Les Paul – it's instantly clear the modern amp does a mighty fine job of recreating much of what's so great about the original. The similarity is striking and there's no fussing with buttons and menus or saving presets – just pure Fender amp tone.

Where the vintage tube amp perhaps has a touch more top-end sparkle and harmonic richness in those elusive break-up tones, the Tone Master has the edge in providing a consistent and a far more coherent tone across the complete range of volume levels. While enjoying sweet syrupy cleans with plenty of snap and pop on low strings and a sprinkling of reverb and tremolo, we soon forget there's not a single thermionic valve in the signal path. And if we're honest, the differences between the digital Tone Master Deluxe Reverb and its all-tube forefather are no greater than the differences we've heard between vintage Deluxe Reverb amps equipped with different valves or speakers. It really is that good!

The reverb itself is stunning, enveloping notes in a beautiful halo of ambience and trailing away with a completely natural decay. The algorithm replicates all the bounce and 'boing' of the original's revered analogue circuit, in fact pretty much all it won't do is make a loud crash when you accidentally kick the side of your amp! Likewise, the Tone Master's 'vibrato' delivers all the classic volume wobble you could ask for, and it's in fact ever so slightly clearer and more prominent than the valve-driven tremolo in our reference vintage Deluxe Reverb.

As we wind up the wick, sweet sparkly cleans morph into dynamic bluesy overdrive at manageable volume, and it's forceful enough to give you a fighting chance with all but the most heavy-handed of rhythm sections. To compete with those guys you need a *Twin*…

As expected, the Tone Master Twin Reverb's larger cabinet and additional speaker significantly widen the breadth of the tone. Richer, rounder bass, more sparkle and well-voiced bright switches mean an even closer playing experience to 'the real thing'. The additional middle controls are also extremely useful for pushing the traditional scooped Blackface tonality into more forthright and aggressive territory.

Both back panels feature a balanced XLR direct out with a level control and a three-position cabinet simulation switch

The controls are all reassuringly old-school – there's not a multifunction rotary control or sub-menu push button in sight

The beauty of using the output-power reduction switch means that it's a joy to wail away at neighbour-friendly volumes, easily copping Bloomfield, Albert King and Peter Green tones ordinarily only attainable at a volume level so visceral it would strip the paint from the walls. In addition, both Tone Masters respond well to drive and fuzz pedals, with a pleasing absence of harsh overtones or digital artefacts.

When you factor in the well-voiced IR outputs, these amplifiers do away with the need to buy an expensive outboard attenuator/IR sim box for recording or going direct to desk live – thus increasing the bang-for-buck factor significantly. That said, we wonder if Fender has missed a trick by not providing a dedicated headphone out for silent practice? In addition, we'd like to have seen an extension speaker output for those who want to incorporate the Tone Masters into more complex setups.

All preconceptions aside, both amplifiers sound exactly as you would hope and deliver Blackface Fender tone by the bucketload. Which one to buy? That's not so simple. In the past, you might have opted for a Deluxe rather than a Twin because of its lighter weight and lower volume, but given the Tone Master Twin Reverb's manageable weight and variable power settings, the decision is less cut and dried.

For many players, the sonic spread of a 2x12 and the expanded EQ will justify the relatively small step up in price from the Deluxe. And for players who create their tones from pedalboards laden with ambience and modulation effects, the Twin really could be the perfect pedal platform.

Whichever you choose, aided by the reassuringly familiar control layout and aesthetics, the Tone Masters offer one of the closest – if not *the* closest – digital emulation of the vintage valve-amp experience this reviewer has tried so far, with very little of the 'detachment' that sometimes makes rival products feel like playing a studio recording of an amplifier rather than the amplifier itself. There's a lot to like about these Tone Masters indeed – here's hoping more Tone Master recreations of classic Fender amps are on the way. G

KEY FEATURES

TONE MASTER DELUXE REVERB
PRICE £869
DESCRIPTION 2-channel modelling combo with reverb and tremolo
POWER 100W into 8-ohms
SPEAKER 1x12" Jensen N-12K neodymium
FRONT PANEL Normal channel: 2x instrument input, volume, treble, bass. Vibrato channel: 2x instrument input, volume, treble, bass, reverb, speed, intensity
REAR PANEL 1x footswitch input, 1x IR emulated XLR line out, ground switch, balanced line out level control, 3-position cabinet emulation switch, 6-position output power selector, mute switch (XLR out remains active), power switch
ADDITIONAL FEATURES USB port for firmware updates, pine cabinet, 2-button footswitch for reverb/tremolo and dust cover included
DIMENSIONS 613 x 432 x 236mm
WEIGHT 10kg/23lb
CONTACT fender.com

9/10 **Simple, versatile, great-sounding and portable – the new benchmark for digital modelling amps**

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

Blackstar Silverline Standard **£369**, Line 6 Spider V60 MkII **£259,** Boss Katana 50 MKII **£237**

KEY FEATURES

TONE MASTER TWIN REVERB
PRICE £999
DESCRIPTION 2-channel modelling combo with reverb and tremolo
POWER 200W into 4-ohms
SPEAKER 2x12" Jensen N-12K neodymium
FRONT PANEL Normal channel: 2x instrument input, bright switch, volume, treble, middle, bass. Vibrato channel: 2x instrument input, bright switch, volume, treble, middle, bass, reverb, speed, intensity
REAR PANEL 1x footswitch input, 1x IR emulated XLR line out, ground switch, balanced line out level control, 3-position cabinet emulation switch, 6-position output power selector, mute switch (XLR out remains active), power switch
ADDITIONAL FEATURES USB port for firmware updates, pine cabinet, 2-button footswitch for reverb/tremolo and dust cover included
DIMENSIONS 676 x 514 x 263mm
WEIGHT 15kg/33lb

9/10 **With expanded EQ and enough spread for any stage, we'd take this on the road in a heartbeat**

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

Marshall Code100 **£349,** Boss Katana 100/212 MKII **£439,** Blackstar Silverline Stereo Deluxe **£749**

Ever dreamed of building

YOUR ULTIMATE CUSTOM GUITAR?

This year we've asked some
of our favourite builders
to help us make that
dream a reality

visit www.theguitarshow.co.uk
to follow the build
and have your say

Voted for by you,
Built by them.
Given away by us to
ONE LUCKY WINNER!

CRIMSON
HJ Williams guitars
OIL CITY PICKUPS
Grainger GUITARS

THE GUITAR SHOW 20

Bingley Hall, Birmingham

Feb 29th - Mar 1st

BOSS
KATANA-50 MKII

WORDS RICHARD PURVIS

Now with added versatility, this compact combo from the second generation of Boss's effects-laden Katana line claims to be good enough – and loud enough – for gigging

Time flies when you're rocking like a mutha – it's now three years since Japanese stompbox giant Boss launched its hugely popular Katana range of solid-state amps, replete with digital tweakery. So here come the second-generation models, including this small, eminently portable and even more eminently affordable 50-watt 1x12 combo: the Katana-50 MkII.

Doesn't look very different to the old one, does it? It's actually not supposed to sound very different, either, but the main advances are in tonal flexibility: there's now a 'variation' option for each of the five amp types, effectively giving you 10 to choose from, and the effects section has been redesigned so you can use up to five at once instead of three. Those five amp types are acoustic, clean, crunch, lead and brown (a high-gain voice based on the EVH-inspired 'brown sound' in the Boss Waza Amp); selection is via a rotary switch, and you simply push the button above it to access the variations. As systems go, it's a whole lot easier than stuffing 10 amps into the boot of the Ford S-Max.

There are still only three knobs in the effects section, but two of them now have concentric mini-knobs to allow for separate control of boost, modulation, delay, reverb and a miscellaneous fifth effect. Obviously, each dial can only control one parameter, but five buttons along the top let you switch between three different models for each effect type, and there's a tap tempo button for the delay. Deeper control over the effects is possible, but requires external software; we'll come to that in a moment.

The MkII has a single custom-designed 12-inch speaker

There are plenty of ins and outs around the back, including USB, aux in, a headphone/recording out and more

We also find master volume and a rotary switch for selecting either 50-, 25- or 0.5-watts of output, and three more buttons that flip between manual and preset modes. By holding down the 'panel' button you can access alternative presets, so four different sounds can be stored and recalled here. More control is available, but again, we need to look beyond the amp itself for that.

Around the back, we find a USB port and a footswitch input. The former lets you connect to a PC or Mac and access a library of fully editable effects and amp tones, allowing you to fill those four preset slots with pretty much any sound you can imagine. The latter isn't quite so exciting: it'll only work with Boss's single and dual footswitches for basic preset switching, or with an expression pedal. The six-switch GA-FC (£79) is much more practical for live use, but that only works with the 100-watt Katana models.

Also on the back panel there's an input feeding directly to the power amp, for plugging in an external preamp or a multi-effects unit with amp simulation, plus headphone/DI out and stereo aux in.

IN USE

This amp really does sound remarkably good, but there are a couple of issues to navigate first. The lightweight fibreboard cabinet feels solid enough for the price, but the two rotary switches don't click into place with any confidence and the concentric pairs of controls sometimes stick together. Also, the whole control panel of our review amp has an intermittent habit of shutting down when you adjust the FX knob, requiring a restart.

You'll have to track down your own cable to hook up a computer via the USB Type B port as one isn't included, but once we

LEFT: The Katana MkII's controls are well designed, packing a lot of functionality into the top panel

BELOW: The Boss Tone Studio offers further effects possibilities and enables you to fill your preset slots with amp and effect models

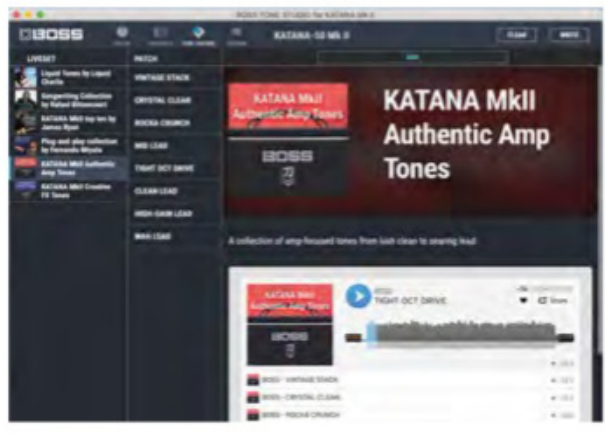
KEY FEATURES

PRICE £237
DESCRIPTION Digital modelling combo with 10 amp models and five effects. Made in Malaysia
POWER RATING 50-watts
FRONT PANEL Guitar input, five-way amp-type selector with variation button, gain, volume, bass, middle, treble, booster, mod, effects, delay and reverb controls with variation buttons and tap tempo, master volume, output power (50w, 25w, 0.5w, standby), preset buttons (four available plus bypass), power switch
REAR PANEL USB Type B, stereo aux input, power-amp input, footswitch or expression pedal input, recording/headphones output
SPEAKERS 1x custom 12" Katana speaker
DIMENSIONS 470 x 398 x 238mm
WEIGHT 11.6kg/25.10lb
CONTACT Boss boss.info

update the firmware on our review unit, the software is a breeze to navigate, with new sounds easily saved onto the amp.

That said, you don't need to connect to anything – well, apart from a guitar – to get the best out of the Katana-50 MkII. It's a small combo and things can get a little congested when you push it hard, but there are some great sounds on offer here right out of the box.

With the output set to 50 watts, a Telecaster on the clean setting floods the room with pure 'valve amp' tone. The low-end power and midrange clarity are truly impressive, even if the Katana-branded speaker arguably wants for a little refinement in the top end. And there's a fair bit of natural grit available, even



without switching up to the crunch setting. It's all impressive and shows how far amp modelling has come.

The two high-gain amp models are just as good, with 'brown' offering an irresistible shortcut to 80s hair metal – add chorus, delay and facial grimaces to taste. And those extra amp variations? They're worthy additions for sure, even if at heart they're just the same five amp types with a more aggressive biting edge – or, to put it another way, a British accent.

The effects are, in a word, familiar – this is a Boss product and we all know what the trusty stompbox titan can do in that field. The pre-loaded selection covers all the basics, from three different boost voicings to a nice trio of reverbs, while the three 'FX' options are tremolo, octave down and a very cool envelope follower.

The software opens up loads more options – over 60 effects in total, covering every imaginable type and with no obvious omissions from the Boss canon – but if you prefer to keep things simple, don't worry: most people will get through most gigs with what comes from the factory.

Would we recommend gigging with this amp? It's certainly loud enough for modern venues, but you will be limited for effect-switching options unless you fancy using a separate pedalboard. For those craving the undiluted all-in-one live experience, that's probably where the 100-watt 1x12 model (£334) comes in. Still, for home practice, rehearsals and small shows, the 50 is quite the pocket powerhouse. G

8/10 **This baby amp kicks out some seriously grown-up tones**

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

Blackstar Silverline Standard **£369**, Marshall Code50 **£223**, Line 6 Spider V 60 MkII **£259**

MADE IN AMERICA
Heritage
Guitar Inc.
BUILT TO LAST
For over three decades we have been crafting award-winning, American-made guitars from our iconic home at 225 Parsons, Kalamazoo. Today, our promise to craft premium guitars for players with an appreciation for the finest, spans from our traditional custom-made guitars to our new Standard Collection.
HERITAGEGUITARS.COM
@heritageguitarinc

HUDSON ELECTRONICS
BROADCAST-AP

WORDS RICHARD PURVIS

Guitar EDITOR'S CHOICE

We love the original Broadcast, an ultra-classy preamp and booster with lashings of fuzzy drive on tap… and now there's a new version designed for slide maestro Ariel Posen

When the Hudson Electronics Broadcast came along in 2016, it wasn't obvious what it was actually for. Not an overdrive, not a booster, this was a preamp – inspired by the ones found in Neve mixing desks – that you plugged into your amplifier like any other stompbox. Why bother? We weren't asking that question once we'd tried it.

Among those blown away by the Broadcast's tone-finessing sorcery was Canadian slide phenom Ariel Posen. But because perfection is never enough for these globetrotting rock stars, Ariel got together with Hudson to create the Broadcast-AP, a signature model with some interesting tweaks – and we don't just mean the pale grey paint job.

The essentials remain the same: it's a preamp with controls for output level and gain, it runs on 9V to 24V of mains power, it's made in Yorkshire and it's got enough understated class to make the average stomper look like something you'd get free with *CBeebies* magazine.

The one obvious difference from the non-AP version is that there's no high/low gain switch, while the low-cut control has become a simple on/off toggle. Inside, it uses a silicon transistor instead of germanium and the transformer is a British-made OEP, which apparently distorts less in the low frequencies than the standard pedal's Triad.

If you're already missing those extra controls, all is not lost. There are internal trimpots for adjusting the gain, the amount of bass that's cut by the switch and the

This version is designed to the spec of Canadian slide maestro Ariel Posen

No numbers for those Neve-style knobs – the Broadcast-AP has a very minimal design

KEY FEATURES

PRICE £189
DESCRIPTION Preamp/boost/drive pedal, made in UK
CONTROLS Level, gain, low cut bypass switch
FEATURES Internal trimpots for gain, low cut and bypassed low cut; true bypass, powered by 9V-24V mains supply only (not supplied)
DIMENSIONS 126 x 94 x 60mm
CONTACT Andertons andertons.co.uk, hudsonelectronicsuk.com

amount of bass that's rolled off even when the switch is bypassed.

IN USE

We begin our testing with a Telecaster into a not-quite-clean American boutique amp. This is hardly a dull tone in need of rescuing, but the effect of the Broadcast-AP, while subtle, is welcome – and familiar.

With gain at zero and level around two o'clock, there's a gentle energising effect that feels like the result of artful mixing on a recorded guitar track: a slight softening of the mids, a freshening-up of the treble and a nice bit of compression over everything.

Ramping up the output level brings a tad more top-end spank than you get from the standard Broadcast, but it's very much the same kind of subtly flattering boost.

With some drive dialled in we hear a little more of a midrange dip than with the other pedal, but only just – really the biggest difference is that you can no longer tweak the bass roll-off or flip to high-gain mode on the fly.

Two minutes with a screwdriver later, we find the fuzz. It doesn't have the warm, gurgling low end of its brother but it's every bit as riotous, with enough gain to hit frightening extremes of spitty rage… at the cost of cleaner tones that aren't as pure as they were before we touched the trimpot. It's a pity; but then again, restrained players might be glad to have the the Broadcast-AP's wilder side safely locked up until it's needed. It looks basic, but there are plenty of tones here for an intriguing stompbox. G

9/10 **An intriguing twist on a top-class tone-enhancing formula**

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

Catalinbread Epoch Pre **£259,** Fredric Effects Regent 150 Preamp **£120,** Xotic Super Sweet Booster **£150**

MXR
CLONE LOOPER

WORDS MICHAEL WATTS

Guitar EDITOR'S CHOICE

MXR returns with a compact, user-friendly looper pedal offering exceptional sound quality and generous looping time

The past decade has seen a surge in the number of musicians blending loop-based ideas into live performances. Correspondingly, demand for looper pedals from the tiniest one-button stomp boxes to pedestrian-crossing-sized multi-pedal, or even laptop-based solutions, has never been higher.

The new MXR Clone Looper is pitched at the guitarist who approaches looping with a creative, performance-based mindset. There are no memory cards, no multi-tracking or mixer banks. Instead you get the bare bones: record/overdub and play/stop footswitches and a multi-function volume knob, more of which later.

The Clone Looper features a generous six minutes of recording time with unlimited layers as well as the requisite undo function just in case your carefully crafted sonic architecture goes awry. The sample rate is a high 88.2kHz, which certainly bodes well for sound quality.

The brushed aluminium case is clearly labelled and importantly the footswitches are far apart enough to avoid accidental stompage in the heat of battle. This is encouraging as live looping can be nerve-wracking, calling for a shock-proof focus and a rock-solid internal sense of timing. Simplest solutions so often being the best, we grab the closest guitar to hand (a wonderful Relish Mary One) and plug in.

IN USE

With the Clone Looper at the end of our chain, we lay down a sparse open-note theme which comes through the amp exactly as played. A few layers later, we

Six minutes of recording time is very generous

The Volume knob is 'stompable', doubling as a control for loop speed and direction

KEY FEATURES

PRICE £159
DESCRIPTION Mono looper pedal, made in the USA
CONTROLS Rec/dub and play/stop footswitches, volume knob with loop direction and speed functions, inputs for external expression and tap tempo pedals
FEATURES 88.2kHz sample rate, six minutes of recording time, unlimited layers, undo, reverse, half and double time functions. 9v DC power supply included
DIMENSIONS 64 x 111 x 49mm
CONTACT westsidedistribution.com, jimdunlop.com

have a nice little groove cooking. Happily, percussive sounds (through the Relish's piezo pickup) and overdriven extended chord voices all retain their clarity and punch within the loop. Older digital loop boxes would inevitably add a glitchy, bitcrusher character to loops after a few layers, but the Clone Looper handles reverb'd, distorted and whammy'd textures with no appreciable degradation in sound quality. It's enough to make us dust off the EBow for a fully indulgent wig out. Almost.

Not everyone uses a looper for performance, of course, and the Clone Looper is also a very capable study tool, allowing you to work out solo or harmony ideas with a minimum of fuss. The half-speed function is particularly helpful here.

Loop speed and loop direction functions are accessed via the push-button volume control. Actively stomping a volume knob just feels wrong to this reviewer so if you don't want to crawl around on the floor tweaking loops, an external switch is recommended. While you're at it, an expression pedal for the volume should arguably also be on your shopping list to offer added creative potential.

Having spent a happy afternoon creating, reversing, stretching and layering different sounds, we remain as impressed with the performance and sound quality of the Clone Looper as we were by the first notes we heard through it. The lack of storage banks for pre-created loops may be a deal-breaker for some players, but we would argue that MXR has created a pedal that aims to encourage the organic spontaneity and musicality that makes performing with loops so much fun in the first place.

9/10 **Simple yet very powerful, this compact high-fidelity looper is a useful addition to any pedalboard**

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

Electro-Harmonix 22500 Dual Stereo Looper **£199**
TC Electronic Ditto X2 Looper Guitar Pedal **£114**
Boss RC-30 Loop Station **£169**

RODENBERG AMPLIFICATION

TB DRIVE SHAKEDOWN SPECIAL

Guitar EDITOR'S CHOICE

WORDS ED OLESZKO

Nashville-based guitarist Tyler Bryant is no stranger to overdrive and this 'Bird Skull' edition of his signature pedal promises plenty of punch…

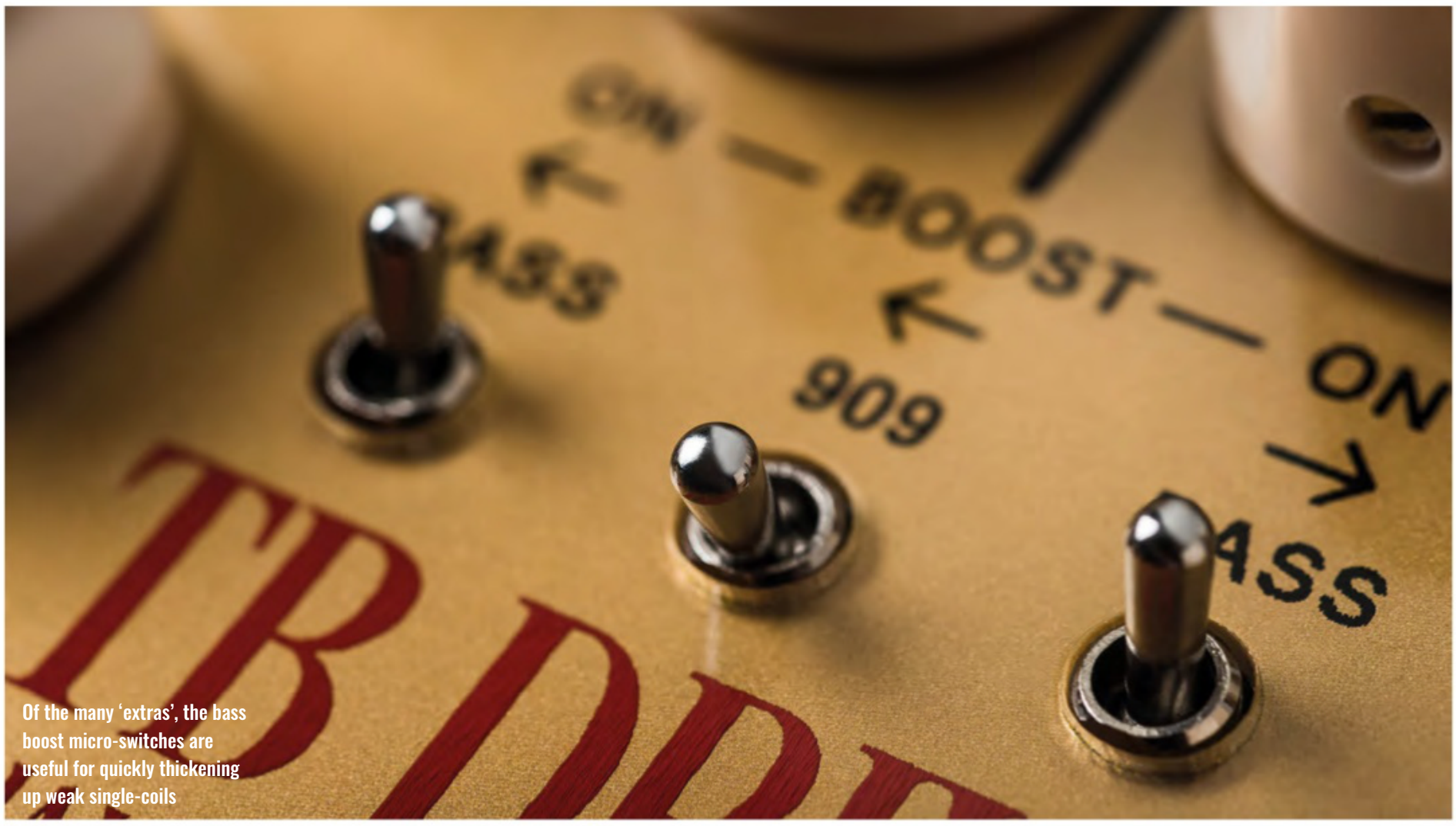
If tours with AC/DC, Guns N' Roses, Aerosmith, ZZ Top, Rival Sons and more haven't yet alerted you to the prodigious talents of Tyler Bryant & The Shakedown, perhaps plugging into this latest version of the guitar-toting frontman's signature pedal will encourage you out from under that rock.

Germany's Rodenberg Amplification – which produces a comprehensive range of single, dual and triple drive pedals along with Marshall-style amps – first joined forces with Tyler Bryant nearly six years ago. Now in its third cosmetic incarnation but retaining the same sounds, the TB Drive Shakedown Special is a mainstay of Bryant's live and recording rig.

"I've been using this pedal for years and it's something I really lean on," he says. "It's on every electric song The Shakedown has recorded. I haven't met an amp or guitar I didn't dig this pedal with yet!"

Dressed in a fetching gold 'Plexi' front panel with amp-style jewel lights, the TB Drive is essentially two independent Rodenberg GAS-808 overdrive pedals in one compact box, plus a few clever extras. Alongside the ubiquitous volume, drive and tone controls are bass boost micro-switches, useful for quickly thickening up weak single-coils or adding closed-back heft to your open-back combo.

The left-hand 808 circuit also has a micro-switch marked '909', which significantly ups the gain from the standard mode. Unscrewing a back panel to access hidden switches and trim-pots is a pain, so it's nice that these features are accessible without having to reach for a screwdriver.



Of the many 'extras', the bass boost micro-switches are useful for quickly thickening up weak single-coils

No plain LEDS here – you get amp-style jewel lights

KEY FEATURES

PRICE €199
DESCRIPTION Dual overdrive pedal. Made in Germany
CONTROLS 2x drive, 2x volume, 2x tone, 2x bass boost mini-toggle. Additional mini-toggle for 909 mode (left side only)
FEATURES True-bypass switching, 9-18V DC mains power only
DIMENSIONS 120 x 94 x 34mm
CONTACT rodenberg-amplification.com

IN USE

Standard 808 mode sits firmly in Screamerland and is reminiscent of the vocal midrange of a vintage TS808 married with the top end punch of a TS9. It's perfect for soaring riffs and leads and has more than enough clarity for a busy mix.

Using the TB Drive in combination with a Strat's controls elicits a vast spectrum of tones from clean boosts, bluesy drives and all points between. The pedal's thick, harmonically-rich lead voice is perfect into a clean blackface Fender amp, but it's even better when paired with a PAF-loaded Les Paul into a cranked 50s tweed combo.

The real ace up this pedal's sleeve can be found by switching the left-hand circuit to 909 mode. Although it's definitely still a soft-clipping high-gain overdrive rather than a metal distortion, 909 is rather like running a couple of overdrives in series, with tons of liquid sustain and squealing harmonics – hours of fun are guaranteed! Although this pedal was designed to deliver Tyler Bryant's signature tone, there's still plenty of scope to find your own voice.

It's a superbly dynamic overdrive, equally at home driving a clean amp or pushing an already driven amplifier into meltdown. G

9/10 **Hugely impressive and versatile, the TB Drive is well-built and lots of fun**

LIKE THIS? TRY THESE...

Keeley D&M Drive **£229**, Analogman King Of Tone **$265**, Kingtone Duellist **£349**

DIY WORKSHOP

HOW TO BUILD A SPEAKER CABINET

PART TWO

WORDS & PHOTOGRAPHY HUW PRICE

The woodwork is mostly complete, but a lot of work still needs to be done before our DIY combo cabinet looks the part. Time to tackle the tweed, filling, staining, lacquering and other hands-on skills...

TOP LEFT The roundover cutter's bearing needs a perfectly flat surface so filler is required and here, one side is done, while the other awaits sanding

TOP RIGHT To roll the cabinet edges, we use the largest radius cutter we can find with a quarter-inch shank, but a 3/4-inch radius is the industry standard

LEFT Filler is also packed into the holes after the baffle screws are removed and the front-edge rollover is done

At the end of Part One of this Workshop, we signed off with the speaker baffle finished, but loosely screwed into the routed rebates in the cabinet panels. It's time to make things more permanent and for this, I mix up another quantity of Cascamite glue.

Cascamite doesn't stick plastic or metal and doesn't require a huge amount of clamping force. There's also a nice long open time, so I can feel relaxed about glueing in the baffle. Before glueing, I drill pilot holes for self-tapping screws all around the baffle's outer edge.

With the glue spread all over the baffle rebate surfaces, I drop the baffle into position and tighten all the screws. The baffle sits flush, no clamps are required and after the glue has set completely, I'm able to remove the screws. Cascamite needs about 24 hours to cure and the best way to be sure is to keep the excess glue in your mixing tub. Once that glue has become crystalline and brittle, you know it has set.

Now it's time to rectify my oversight when routing the rebate channels. I went all the way to the ends of the panels, which left me with small rectangular gaps in each corner. These need to be filled, so I begin by cleaning out wood splinters and stray bits of glue.

Although I wiped the squeeze-out away from the front of the baffle immediately using a damp cloth, there is some squeeze-out inside the cabinet and in the corner gaps. Fortunately, Cascamite is very forgiving and it simply flakes off with a little persuasion from a chisel blade.

Four little pine rectangles are cut from leftover pieces from the cabinet construction. Each is custom fit to its gap and tapped into position with some Titebond Original. The fit is so tight, no clamps are required. After an hour or so, I'm able to file and sand the insert pieces flush. It's almost as if it never happened…

ROLLING OVER

With the exception of mid 1960s WEMs, I can't think of any amp or speaker cabinets with square edges. The rounded edges are called 'rollovers' and that's what I'm planning to do. Ideally, I'd be using a 3/4-inch radius roundover bit in my router, but 1/2-inch is the largest I can find with a 1/4-inch shaft.

I get mine from Axminster Tools & Machinery and they come with a bearing guide at the end of the cutter. The bearing needs a flat edge to run against, so a bit of preparation work is required. After all, my box joints are less than perfect and those screw holes in the baffle won't do at all.

Wood filler provides the solution and I use the type with the separate hardener that has to be mixed with the filler paste. If you've ever performed body repairs on a car, this type of filler will be familiar to you. Mix it, spread it on fairly thick and let it harden completely. All being well, you'll be left with perfectly smooth and flat surfaces once you've sanded off the excess.

With my cabinet fully prepped, I fix my roundover bit in my router. Always ensure your router is disconnected from the mains

RIGHT Rory Coupland begins the tweeding process by glueing strips on the inside edges of the speaker and control panel cutouts

FAR RIGHT The baffle is covered and Rory folds the corners together and presses the tweed into the edges of the cutouts

BELOW Multiple cuts are made to fold the tweed around the cutout edges, but the effect will look less like sunflowers once the excess is trimmed

BOTTOM RIGHT Masking tape is applied before the glue to keep the exposed areas of tweed clean

when you're fitting and adjusting cutting bits. Setting the plunge depth requires attention – if the plunge depth is too great, you'll end up routing channels into your cabinet. Conversely, if it's too shallow, the rollover will have a slightly square edge.

I use my set square to set the depth, making the cutting edge absolutely level with the router's base. Once I'm happy, I lock it off and do some trial cuts on scrap pieces of timber. A full-size router table might make this job easier and safer, but I'm obliged to do this by hand.

Of course, the router has to sit perfectly flat on the panel surface to keep everything square. Router bases are not especially large, and routers are heavy and cumbersome devices, so it's worth taking some time to practise. Once the cutting bit is spinning, the router almost feels like it self-levels, and I also discover that it's better to move the router along briskly.

When you're nervous about ruining all your hard work, you may be more inclined to approach this slowly. In practice, however, the router is more likely to wobble about if you do and I find that committing to the cut, and pushing the router along at a reasonable pace, produces better results.

With all the edges done, the cab has a squarer look than tweed Fenders. Instead, it looks more like a vintage Marshall or Vox, and I'm pretty happy to go with that.

MATERIAL BENEFITS

I've realised that by employing a porthole design, I may have bitten off more than I can chew. Maybe a cab-building novice such as myself should have started out with a simpler wide- or narrow-panel design.

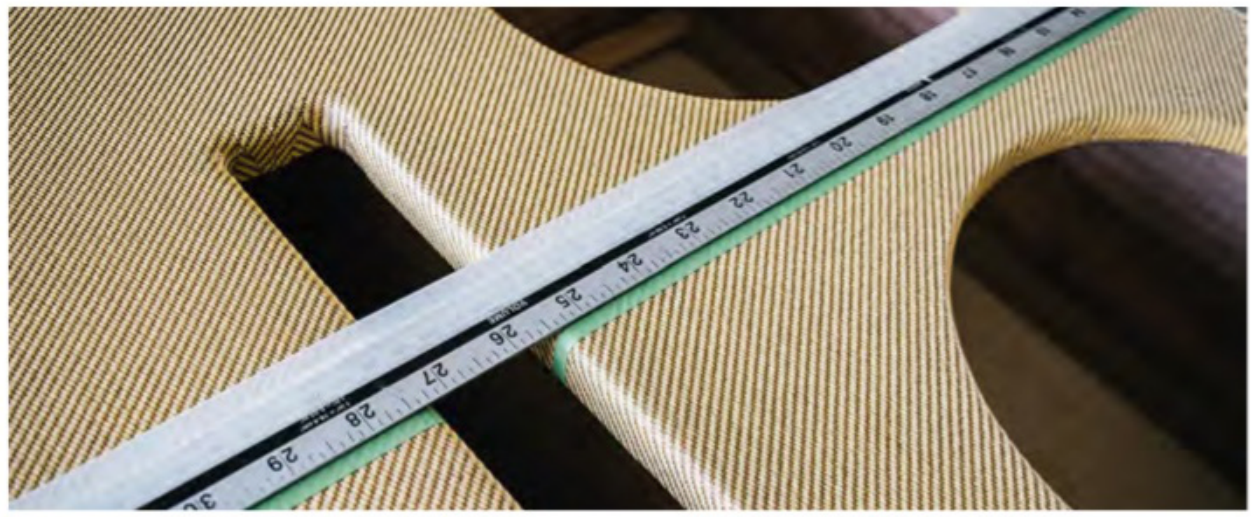
Armed with two yards of tweed from Allparts UK, I decide to take a trip to the Ceredigion workshop of expert cabinet builder and finisher Rory Coupland (rorycoupland@hotmail.co.uk) to tackle the tricky front panel. Even Rory finds the cab a bit of a handful and before long, he begins referring to it as 'The Beast'.

The first order of business is to cut long and thin strips of tweed to wrap around the rolled inner edges of the portholes and control-panel opening. Next, Rory cuts the tweed for the front panel and the intention is to use a single piece that wraps around all four edges. Rory uses a water-based contact adhesive that's specially formulated for tweed and Tolex. It's odour-free, too and you can buy it from Allparts UK.

I'm especially impressed with the way Rory does the corners. The tweed is wrapped around the front edges and pressed together as it meets at the corner. This leaves a large folded section along the corner line, like a boat sail and Rory takes sharp scissors to cut the tweed as close as possible to the cabinet.

With the excess removed, the pieces are pressed down together and the resulting join is almost invisible. Rory then cuts around the edges of the tweed to achieve a straight overlap line all around the cabinet.

Back home, I'm tasked with completing the tweeding and with a deadline looming, I opt for a more conventional contact adhesive. I follow Rory's instructions closely,



FAR LEFT The front, top and side pieces meet at the corner, with the top piece overlapping the front piece, the side piece overlapping both and the bottom piece going on last

TOP Pinstriping begins with laying out plastic masking tape along the centre line with a metal straight edge taped to the front for guidance

MIDDLE With seven strips of plastic tape applied, two pieces of regular masking tape are also used

BOTTOM Three strips of the plastic tape are peeled off to expose the tweed for the tobacco-brown stripes

spreading the glue as evenly as possible on both the cabinet and the tweed and leaving adequate time for the glue to go off before bringing the parts together.

All the tweed pieces are pre-cut to size using a utility knife with a fresh blade and I place masking tape on the cabinet and existing tweed to ensure that the glue only goes where it's needed. I use a flat wooden block to press the tweed down and eliminate any bumps and bubbles – and although progress is slow, I finish the job in an afternoon.

Tweeding the cab turns out to be tremendous fun and it's useful to have an early 50s Fender Deluxe on hand to help me orientate the lines properly. At the end of the day, I'm left with a sense of jubilation and a thumping headache. If you're planning on doing something like this, my advice is to get some of Allparts' water-based adhesive.

ON THE PANEL

Cutting the plywood back panels after the cab has been tweeded seems sensible, because I'm able to allow for the thickness of the tweed when I'm cutting them to size. The bottom panel is a simple rectangle, but the larger upper panel needs a cutout to provide ventilation for the amp. I decide on a large hole in the style of some Swart and Vintage 47 amps.

I make a circle-cutting jig just like the one used for the speaker cutouts, but this one is made for a Dremel mounted in a Stewart-MacDonald base and a two-inch radius. I use it to cut two holes a short distance apart, and then use a jigsaw to join them up. The resulting opening measures nine inches wide by four inches tall and I round over the edges with my router.

Now it's my turn to heed Rory's lesson and apply tweed around a cutout. I glue a tweed strip all around the inside edge of the cutout and trim the tweed flush with the back of the panel.

With the tweed applied to the front and sides, I flip the panel over, cut the tweed along the centre line, just up to the start of the curves and then make a series of cuts from the inside edges of the curves to the end of the centre-line cut. As the tweed is wrapped around the edges, it fans out into a star shape and I can finally close the lid on that stinky contact adhesive.

FINISHING TOUCHES

It has never been my intention to make a tweed Fender clone. Instead, I feel the Filmosound amp's brown crackle finish is better suited to a pre-war Gibson vibe. The porthole idea came from the EH-185 cabinet design and I'm quite taken with the pinstriping that was also a feature of that era.

I decide to give it a try and after a generous coat of clear wax-free shellac has properly dried, I establish a centre line between the speaker holes and start running 6mm-wide plastic masking tape that you can buy at car-paint shops along the edge of a steel ruler for guidance.

With the centre strip done, I apply three more strips on each side of it and then apply regular masking tape and printer paper to protect the cabinet inside and out. The centre strip of plastic tape and the two outer strips are then carefully peeled away to reveal three lines of bare tweed.

TIME FOR LACQUER

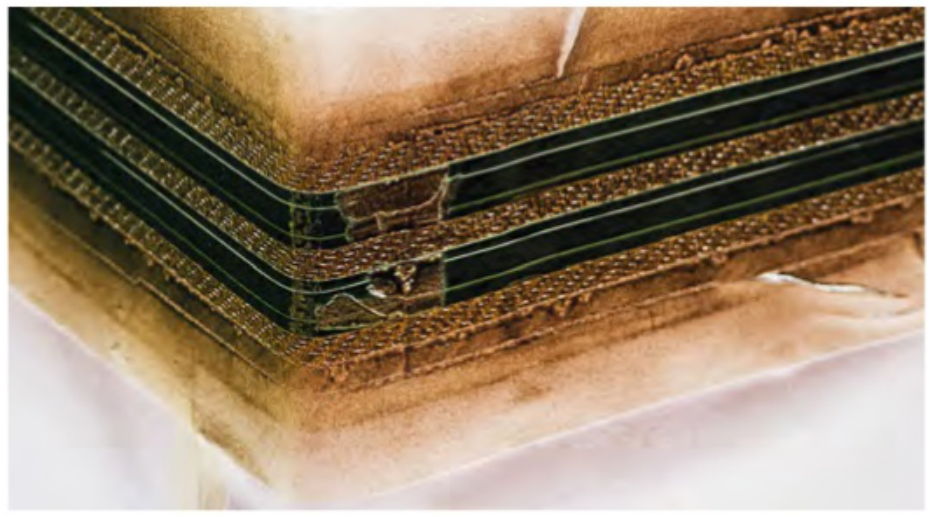
The cabinet is set on its side and I spray the exposed tweed with three coats of tobacco-brown lacquer. I tend to achieve cleaner lines by removing tape while the lacquer is still slightly soft. After 10 minutes, I remove the remaining plastic masking tape to reveal two more strips of bare tweed.

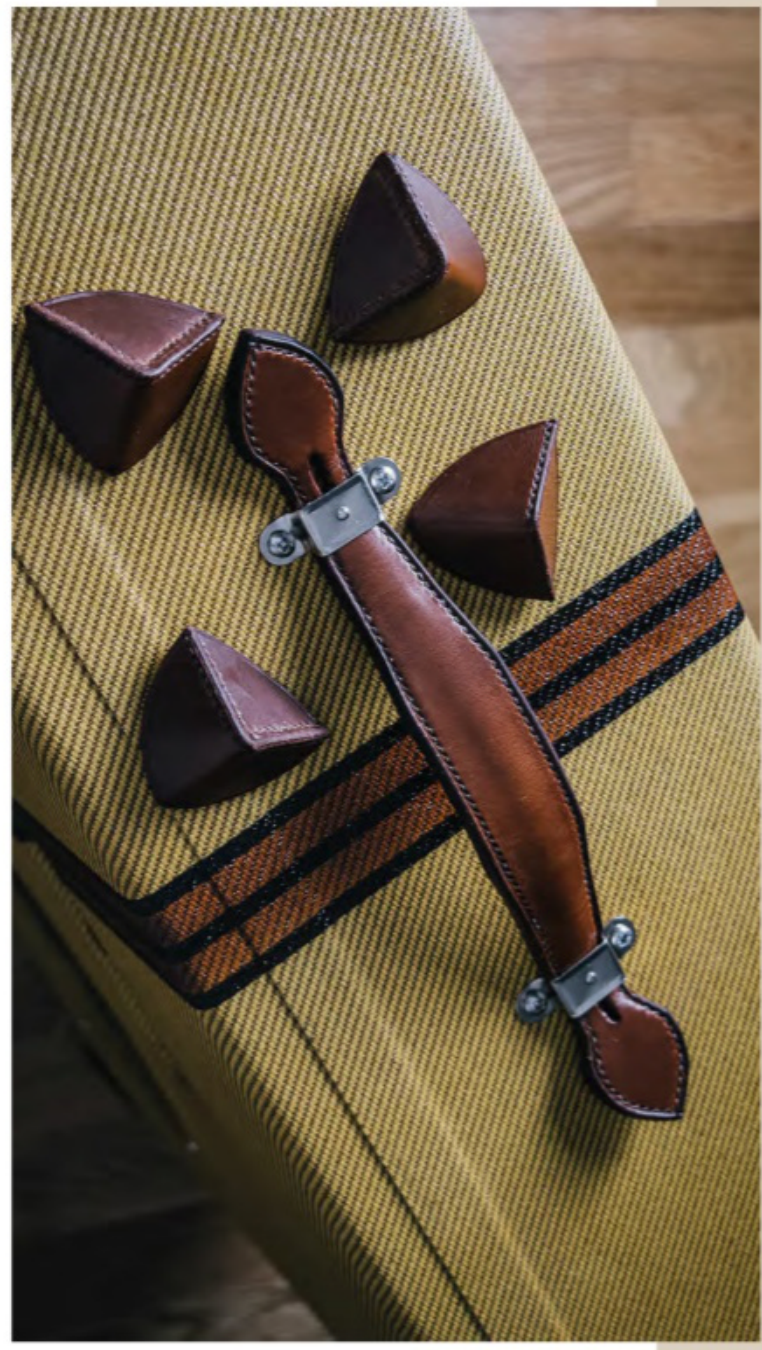
TOP The rest of the cabinet is shielded off with printer paper and masking tape before spraying the tobacco brown

MIDDLE With the remaining plastic tape removed, stage one of the pinstriping is complete

BOTTOM Medium-brown lacquer is sprayed onto the exposed tweed, and since it's lighter in shade, the tobacco brown retains its colour

FAR RIGHT TCR Saddlery provided us with a hand-stitched leather handle and matching corner protectors for a vintage Gibson look





Now I spray medium-brown lacquer over the whole area for a contrasting look – tobacco-brown stripes sandwiching two wider stripes of lighter reddish brown. With the remaining masking tape and paper shielding removed, I'm left with pinstriping running along the cab's top, base and front.

Finally, I spray the cabinet and rear panels with a tin of tinted clear lacquer followed by a tin of clear gloss. The following day, I gently rub the cab down with a Scotch pad to knock the sheen back a tad, and the finishing process is complete.

THE FINAL CORNER

A while back, I reviewed an Elektra The 185 amplifier and its looks left a big impression on me. Among its features were leather corner protectors and a matching handle. These things aren't available from regular amp-parts suppliers, so sometimes you have to think outside the box.

I contacted TCR Saddlery, which made me hand-stitched corner covers and a handle that is way superior to any of the commonly available leather handles. The bottom corners are fixed with serrated grab nails and the handle brackets are fixed with regular screws.

Rather than speaker cloth, I once again follow Gibson and use a perforated metal sheet. I was concerned that it might be hard to source, but it turns out that B&Q stocks the right stuff. With some minor alterations, I'm able to place the metal grilles over the speaker screws and load up a pair of Celestion G10 Gold 10-inch speakers.

With a routed notch at each side of the amp shelf, I'm able to hook the speakers up to the amp and connect the mains cable, which is secured to the side of the cabinet with a plastic retaining hook. The back panels are fixed on and it's time for testing.

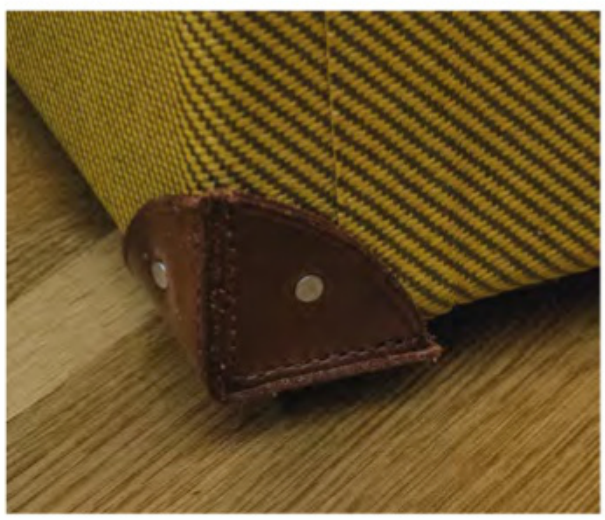
Any concerns about an overly resonant cabinet are quickly dispelled. More by luck than judgement, the tone is full and balanced. The lows are deep without being boomy, the midrange sounds clear and there's a naturally open quality without any boxiness.

I've learned a lot during this project and there are some things that I might have done differently. For instance, the cab is about 75mm taller than it needs to be and next time, I'll make the batons for the back-panel screws a bit larger. Ditto the control-panel opening, because I failed to account for the thickness of the tweed. I should also have gone a bit lighter on the medium-brown pinstripes.

I'll definitely be taking out the metal grille and cutting it into two smaller and more rounded pieces – if only to improve the looks. And I do need to find some nicer panel screws. I also have to make a decision about fitting my four remaining corner protectors to the top of the cab, but I'm leaving them off for the time being.

With the cost of the materials and the tools I bought especially for the job, this hasn't been a money-saving project. In fact, a bare-wood 5E3-style cabinet for a Filmosound is currently available on a well-known auction site for less money. Then again, I've learned new skills, I have a totally unique cabinet and I thoroughly enjoyed the whole project. And that's what all this DIY stuff should be about.

I'd like to thank Mike Phillips, Rory Coupland and Tamsin Raymond for their craftsmanship and kindness in helping with this project.



TOP The speaker grille and speakers are mounted and the amp shelf slides into position ready for the rear panels

LEFT All done! Time for testing... and the new cabinet sounds great!

CRIMSON
Luthiery School
GUITAR BUILDING COURSES
Prices start at £895
Learn to build in our bespoke Student Workshop, in the heart of Dorset.
Your journey to becoming a Luthier starts here.
For more information:
crimsonguitars.com
01300 348863

Doublestops, triplet licks and full-tone bends were all a common part of Stevie Ray Vaughan's blues guitar vocabulary

ESSENTIAL BLUES LESSONS

PART 12 COMBINING RHYTHM WITH BASIC LICKS

WORDS LEIGH FUGE

The latest part of our essential guide to blues guitars sees us start to put it all together, as we combine rhythm with the basic lead lines we've learned so far…

A few instalments back in Essential Blues Lessons part six, we discussed the idea of combining rhythm with some simple lead passages to get the fingers on our left hand moving.

In this instalment, we're going to take some of the ideas we discussed in lesson 11 about forming basic licks and combine those with some rhythmic elements. When you compare this with what you were doing back in lesson six, you'll see how much closer you are to forming a great blues piece.

In this lesson, we'll look at two 12-bar patterns, both of which have a shuffle feel but contain a different way of playing the rhythmic element. Both examples are in the key of A Minor and utilise lead passages made from notes in the A Minor Pentatonic scale in the pentatonic first shape and second shape. We will also be using the legato techniques we learnt in part seven, and string bending we learnt in part 10.

© Ebet Roberts/Getty Images

EXAMPLE 1

This first example will be played with the rhythmic element based around an open power chord shape that we saw in the first example of lesson two (*Guitar Magazine* issue 366). The triplet feel will be present throughout this whole 12 bar cycle.

(1 2 3, 2 2 3, 3 2 3, 4 2 3)

In the first six bars, the lick will happen at the end of every other bar. The first is a triplet on the third beat starting with a full-tone bend on the 7th fret of the G before going up over the 5th fret on the B and E strings. The short run ends with a full-tone bend on the 8th fret of the B, which is a quarter-note.

The second lick is a longer, descending part. It is made up of a triplet on the third and fourth beats. The first triplet is the 5th fret on the E string followed by a pull off from the 8th fret to the 5th on the B. The second triplet is a quick full tone bend on the 7th fret of the G followed by the 5th fret of the G and the 7th fret of the D.

The third lick is a doublestop played with a triplet rhythm. The doublestop is made up of the 9th fret of the G and the 8th fret of the B strings. You'll slide into the first beat of each triplet, giving you a slide guitar feel.

Bars 7 through 12 in this example do stray from the "lick at the end of every other bar" format we followed in the first half. The first bar in this half is the rhythm, and there is a one on the second bar. We also have them on the third, fourth and sixth bars of this example. In a 12-bar form that will be bars 8, 9, 10 and 12.

The first lead line that appears in bar 8 comprises two sets of triplets. The first triplet starts with a slide to the 7th fret of the D before playing the 5th on the G and back to the 7th on the D. The second triplet starts with the 5th on the G, goes back to the 7th on the D and then ends on the 7th of the G. To achieve this, you'll want to roll the finger used to play the D string down.

The second is a simple full-tone bend on the 7th fret of the G followed by the 7th fret played normal and the 5th fret. This retains the triplet feel of the rhythm part.

The third one is similar to the first, except it doesn't roll down to the 7th on the G. The 5th fret of the G that opens the second triplet of the lick is held for the duration of two notes.

The final riff found in bar 12 of this cycle will be the most ambitious one we have attempted thus far in the series. It's all triplets; the first two are identical. A bend on the 7th fret of the G followed by the 5th fret on the B and E strings. The third triplet is the 8th and 5th frets of the B string followed by another full tone bend on the 7th of the G and the final triplet is a pull-off from the 7th to the 5th fret on the G and the 7th fret on the D to end.

EXAMPLE 2

This example will be played with the rhythmic element based around a fretted octave shape as seen in example two of lesson two. The triplet feel will be present throughout this whole 12-bar cycle.

The format of the first six bars is the same with the lick appearing at the end of bars 2, 4 and 6. The first is a simple full-tone bend of the 7th fret on the G, which falls on the first note of the triplet starting on the fourth beat, this is held for the duration of two notes before finishing on the 5th fret of the G.

The second riff uses the last note of the third beat triplet as its starting point. Once you have picked the final note of the third beat triplet, which is the 5th fret of the D

EXAMPLE 1

string, you will then to a hammer on to the 7th fret and pull off back to the 5th fret before finishing on the 7th fret of the A string. The third lead line is a slide from the 7th to the 9th fret of the G before finishing on the 8th fret of the B string.

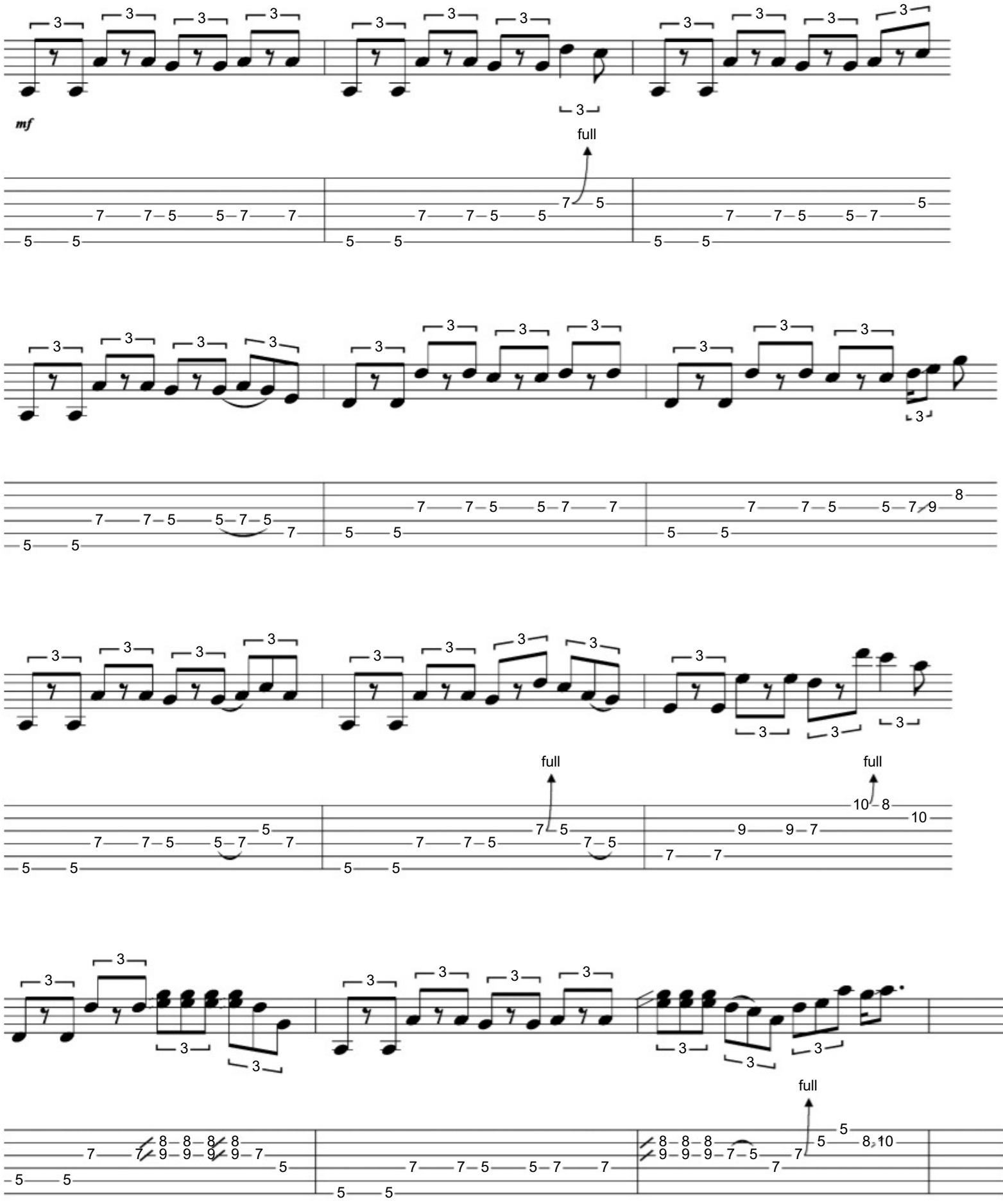
As with the first example, the final six bars stray from format established in the first six. These bars have a lick on every bar except for bar 11 of the overall cycle. The first riff once again starts on the end of the third beat triplet as a hammer-on from the 5th to 7th fret of the D string. This is followed by the 5th fret on the G and 7th fret on the D.

The second starts on the end of the third beat triplet but with a different note. You will be doing a full tone bend on the 7th fret of the D string before hitting the final triplet descending run from the 5th fret of the G and through a pull off from the 7th to 5th fret on the D.

The third lick takes you up into the second shape of the scale. Which starts with a full tone bend on the end of the third beat triplet from the 10th fret of the E string. The final triplet is made up of the 8th fret of the E string held for the duration of two notes and the 10th fret of the B.

The fourth line covers a triplet on beats three and four and starts with the same doublestop sliding motif we used earlier for the first triplet, but the second triplet contains the slid doublestop on the first note then the

EXAMPLE 2



7th fret of the G and 5th fret of the D to finish.

The final riff of this cycle is another big one. The first triplet is the recurring slid double stop. The second triplet is a pull-off from the 7th to the 5th fret of the G and the 7th on the D. The third triplet is an ascending run starting with a full tone bend on the 7th fret of the G before going to the 5th on the B and E strings. The final note is not a triplet, it's a slide from the 8th to the 10th fret of the B string.

TRY IT YOURSELF

There are no set rules about where in a 12-bar cycle you should or could put your licks. Use your own initiative and place them in segments of the rhythmic pattern where it feels natural to do so. Use your ear and experiment by moving them around.

One interesting concept to consider is flipping the format around and starting a bar with a lick before going back into the rhythm at the tail end of the bar. Blues is a very experimental genre and this lesson will get you on the way to playing some fully formed blues passages! G

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Leigh Fuge is a guitar teacher and professional musician from Swansea in the UK. He's taught hundreds of students face-to-face and via the MGR Music platform. He has over 10 years' experience working in the industry as a touring musician, session guitarist and teacher. To find a qualified guitar teacher in your area, visit mgrmusic.com

SOUNDPAD

Tel 01271 323686 **www.soundpad.co.uk** **info@soundpad.co.uk**

SINCE 1972 **Service Second to None**
Online & Instore

Next Working Day Delivery
Available in the UK from £12

Take it away **Finance Available**
Call for more details

Recent arrivals..

Ibanez JEM77P BFP Premium
Steve Vai Signature. Finished in Blue Floral Pattern. Premium Neck. Tree of Life Inlay. Monkey Grip. Includes Premium Soft Case.

Ibanez JS24P-CA Joe Satriani Signature
Finished in Candy Apple Red. 3 piece Maple / Bubinga Neck. Rosewood Fingerboard. DiMarzio The Chopper & Mo' Joe Pickups.

Ibanez Premium RG1070FM-NTL
Finished in Natural Low Gloss. DiMarzio Air Norton, True Velvet & Tone Zone Pickups. Panga Fingerboard. Includes Gig Bag.

Ibanez AZ24202 ICM Prestige
Finished in Ice Blue Metallic. Roasted Maple Neck. Seymour Duncan Hyperion Pickups. Dyna-MIX 10 Switching. Includes Hard Case.

Ibanez AZ242FTSG Premium
Finished in Tequila Sunrise Gradation. Seymour Duncan Hyperion Pickups. Flamed Maple Top. Includes Padded Gig Bag.

Ibanez Genesis RG550-RF
Finished in Road Flare Red. Made in Japan. Super Wizard Neck. V7, S1 & V8 Pickups. Edge Tremolo System.

Ibanez Iron Label FRIX6FEAH-CSF
Finished in Charcoal Stained Flat. Ash Top. Ebony Fingerboard. EMG 60/81 Active Pickups with Killswitch. Nitro Wizard Neck.

Ibanez Iron Label RGIX6FDLB-NLB
Finished in Northern Lights Burst. DiMarzio Fusion Edge Pickups. Luminescent Side Dot Inlay. Nitro Wizard 3 Piece Neck.

Fender American Original 50s Tele
Ash Body. Pure Vintage 52 Pickups. Thick U Shaped Neck. Vintage Style Hardware. Includes Vintage Style Hard Case.

Fender American Elite Stratocaster
Finished in Aged Cherry Burst. Maple Neck. S1 Switching. Compound Profile Neck. Locking Machine Heads. Includes Hard Case.

Taylor T3 (Tobacco Sunburst)
Circa 2008/9. Quilted Maple Top. Ebony Fingerboard. Dual High Definition Humbucking Pickups. Original Hard Case Included.

Epiphone Popa Chubby Korina Flying V
Made in 2001 in Korea. Korina Body. Maple Neck with Rosewood fingerboard. P90 Pickups. Includes Hard Case. Photos Online.

Gibson 2016 SJ-200 Vintage
SJ22VNGH1. Thermally Aged Adirondack Red Spruce Top. Maple B&S. Rosewood fingerboard. LR Baggs Pickup. Hard Case & Docs.

Martin USA GPCA1 Plus
Performing Artist Grand Performance. East Indian Rosewood Back & Sides. Solid Spruce Top. Built in Fishman F1 Pickup. Hard Case.

Ovation C2078AXP-AF Elite Plus
Finished in Okoume Feather. Unique Lyrachord Back & Sides. Deep Contour Body Design. Built in Pickup System. Hard Case.

PRS SE Angelus Limited Edition
Figured Koa Burst Back & Sides. Solid Spruce Top. Mahogany Neck with Ebony Fingerboard. Built in Fishman Pickup. Hard Case.

Rickenbacker 4003 (Fireglo)
Brand New. 2019 Model. A classic Ricki Design. Rosewood fingerboard. Maple Body with through neck. Includes Hard Case.

Rickenbacker 4003 (Midnight Blue)
Brand New. A classic Ricki Design. 20 Frets. Rosewood fingerboard. Maple Body with through neck. Includes Hard Case.

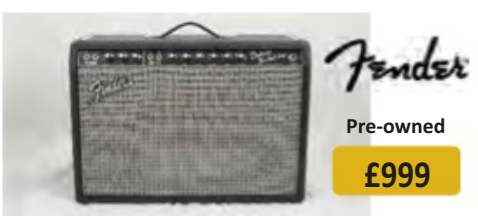
Sandberg Basic VM4EB (Black Satin)
Made in Germany. Ash Body. Sixfold bolted Neck. Ebony Fingerboard. Split Coil & Humbucker Pickups. Active 2 Band EQ.

Fender Jaco Pastorius Jazz Bass
Fretless bass. Signature Model. American Vintage Pickups. C Shape Neck. Nitrocellulose Sunburst finish. Includes Hard Case.

Taylor 814CE Grand Auditorium
Circa 2011. Made in El Cajon, USA. Rare Sunburst Finish. Spruce Top. Rosewood Back & Sides. Expression Pickup. Hard Case & Docs.

Taylor 412e Grand Concert
Solid Sitka Spruce Top. Solid Ovangkol Back & Sides. Built in Taylor Expression 2 Pickup System. With Original Hard Case and Docs.

Taylor 524e Grand Auditorium
All Mahogany. Built in Expression 2 Pickup System. Made from Tropical Mahogany. Ebony Fingerboard. Original hardcase & docs.



Fender '65 Deluxe Reverb
22 watts. 12" Jenson Speaker. All Valve. Normal & Vibrato Channels. Spring Reverb. Circa 1990. Recently serviced & PAT tested.

Soundpad Ltd. Units 1&2, Rolle Quay House, Rolle Quay, Barnstaple, North Devon. EX31 1JE.
Opening Times: Mon-Sat: 9.30am - 5.30pm. **Sunday:** Closed

All pre-owned Instruments and Equipment carry full 3 months warranty (parts & labour). All prices include VAT.

© Denise Truscello / Getty Images

Dave Keuning mixes meaty chords with more inventive arpeggios

CHORD CLINIC

HOW TO PLAY CHORDS LIKE THE KILLERS

WORDS ROD FOGG

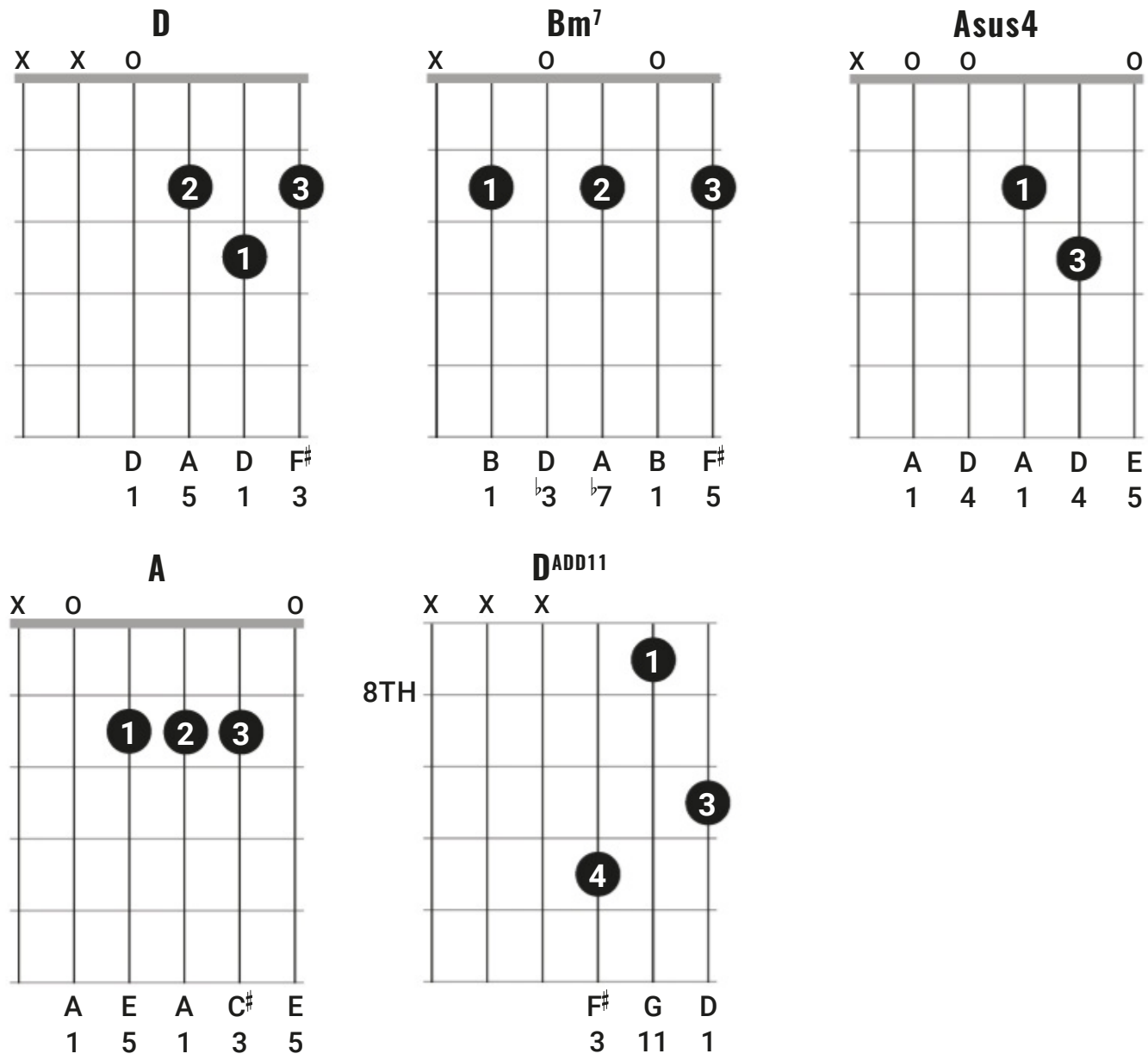
The Killers are one of the biggest rock bands of the 21st century and guitarist Dave Keuning was a founding member. In this Chord Clinic we take a look at his guitar style and chord choices…

The first four chords in figure 1 make a four-bar sequence which you can loop around. Start by holding each chord for four beats, letting them ring, and then gradually loosen up into a chugging downstroke rhythm. Notice the distinctive minor seventh chord – these are by no means commonplace in rock music. Also there is an unusual voicing of Asus4, which doubles the suspended fourth strengthening the resolution when we arrive on A major.

The fifth chord in the example we've called Dadd11, but in reality the name would change with each chord, as the idea is that you play it as an arpeggio over each of the four chords above. There's no need to be particularly busy, just play three or four notes as each chord changes. If your ears tell you there is a need for resolution when you reach the A major chord try ending on the ninth fret of the G string instead of the 11th fret. Repeating the same riff over a moving chord sequence is a Keuning trademark.

The first three chords in figure 2 will give you another four-bar sequence if you play the A chord for two bars. You might have

FIGURE 1


D
X X O
D A D F♯
1 5 1 3
Bm7
X O O
B D A B F♯
1 ♭3 ♭7 1 5
Asus4
X O O O
A D A D E
1 4 1 4 5
A
X O O
A E A C♯ E
1 5 1 3 5
DADD11
X X X
8TH
F♯ G D
3 11 1

DISCOVER THE LEGEND
SUPRO
BLUES KING 8
The Blues King 8 is a modern rendition of the low-wattage Supro amplifiers that were produced in Chicago during the mid 1950s. Every element of the Blues King 8 amplifier was developed from scratch to deliver the legendary headroom and dynamics that define the vintage Supro sound.
SUPROUSA.COM
jhs
www.jhs.co.uk
Find your nearest Supro stockist at -
www.jhs.co.uk/storelocator
Guitars | Amplifiers | Effects | Accessories

FIGURE 2

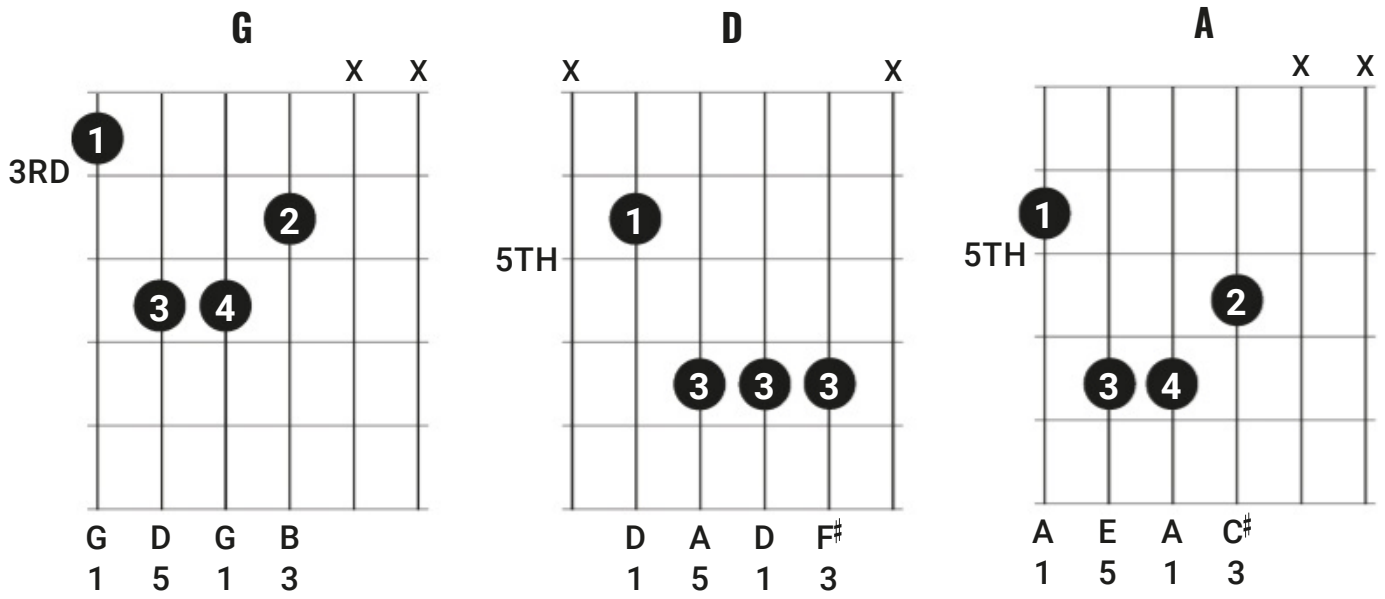
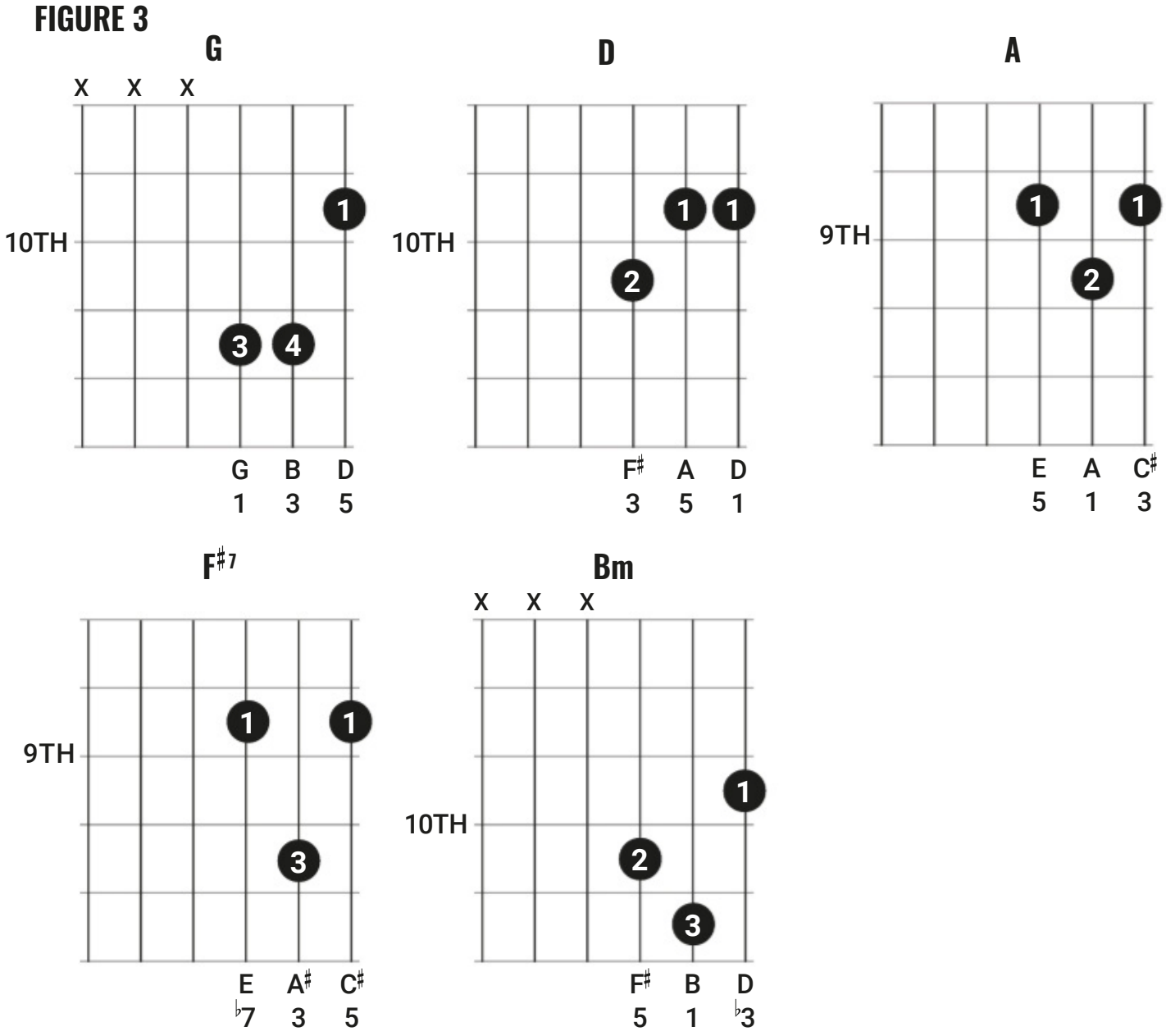


FIGURE 3



Watford Valves

24 HOUR ONLINE ORDERING AT www.watfordvalves.com
All valves individually multi-tested and digitally matched.
Expert advice on all valve amps.
THE MUSICIANS CHOICE ☎ 01923 893270

CRYOGENIC

AC/DC, Oasis, Brian May, Manics, Radiohead and Peter Gabriel buy our valves

*** WINTER SPECIAL ***

Marshall EL34B £10.26 Each

Genuine Marshall EL34B with Marshall logo printed on the valve

Soundwise these EL34 valves have it all. In clean mode they have a harmonic open top which provides a warm transparent and sparkling clean sound. When overdriven the valve has a nice crunchy early break up. These are all burnt in and premium selected by Marshall and then Dual matched by us.

These premium quality Marshall EL34B just £10.26 each with code GBNOV10

Bulk discounts available see our website for details

VALVE KITS FOR EVERY AMP - See our website for full details

SPECIAL OFFER ON JJ VALVE KITS

Our JJ revalve kits consist of a specially selected set of JJ ECC83 S preamp valves combined with selected and matched sets of JJ output valves. All preamp valves in our kits are specially selected and include a balanced valve for the phase inverter position. All output valves are burnt in and dual matched on current and output gain.

Fender Blues/Hot Rod Deville deluxe	**£69.60**	**Mesa Single Rectifier**	**£100.80**
Marshall JCM 900 Series 2500	**£65.40**	**Vox AC30 Custome Series**	**£80.40**

Kits for all amps - Black Star, Bugera, Cornford, Engl, Fender, Laney, Marshall, Mesa Boogie. Orange, Victory, Vox etc full details on website

CELESTION SPEAKERS

Many models on free delivery - see our website for details

Celestion G12 Super 65 - special 65 watt 4 ohm ONLY £30

Big discounts on all Guitar and Bass Speakers
10% OFF ALL 12 inch guitar speakers when you use this code GBNOV10
Full range in stock, see our website

MAIL ORDER Fax: 01923 679207

☎ **01923 893270**

SOLO SWITCH VISA

see our new website
www.watfordvalves.com

FIGURE 4

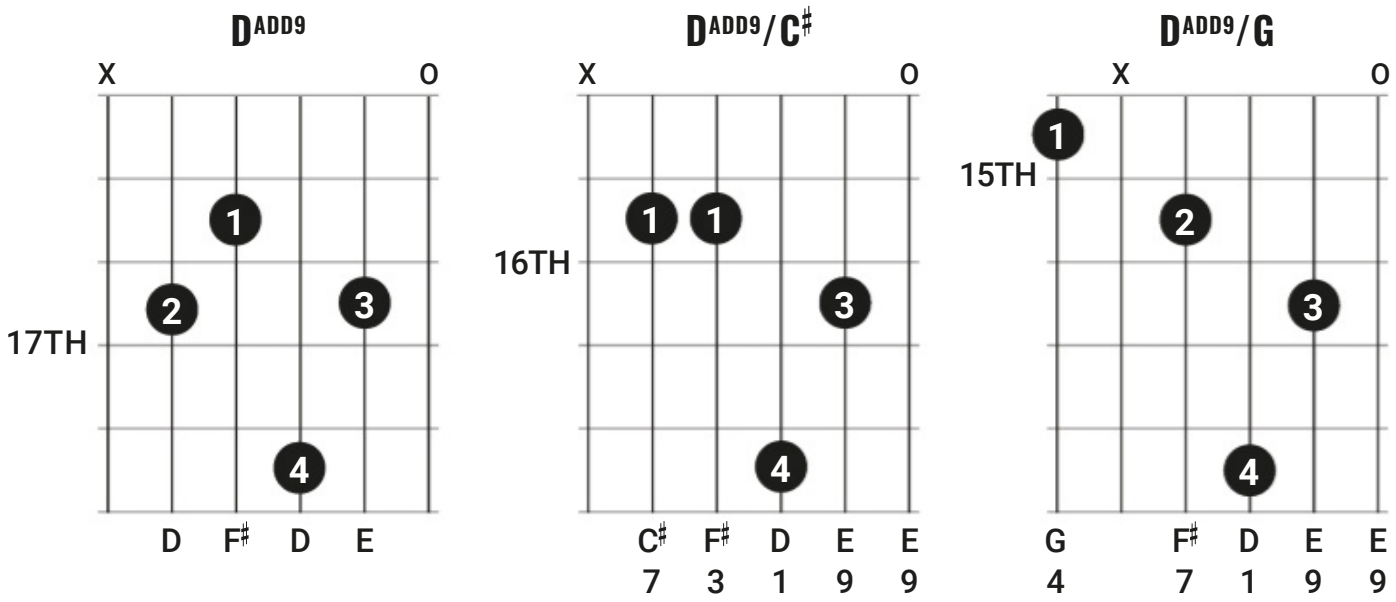
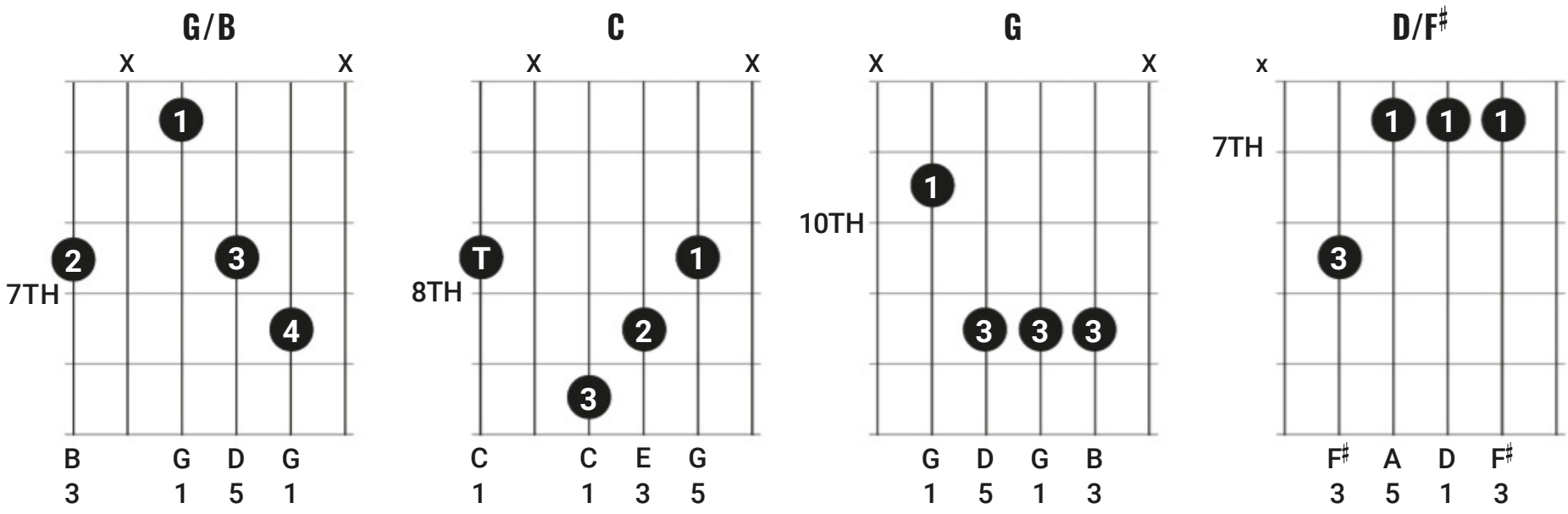


FIGURE 5



spotted that this is the unremarkable chord IV, I, and V in the key of D major, and that the voicings are also fairly commonplace. We are going to play this four-bar sequence three times, which takes us to the interesting bit. Third time through, only play half a bar of A major, followed by F#/A# and B Minor. Then, to round things off, play a couple of bars of G and A and you should have a 16-bar sequence.

CONVENTIONAL CHORDS...TWISTED

Here at Chord Clinic we like this because it shows the way that Keuning and co can begin with a very conventional chord sequence and add an interesting twist, taking it to a whole new level. Having the A# in the bass makes the F# major chord seem to push more strongly towards the B minor chord. As an experiment, try playing a root position F# chord instead, or leave it out altogether and go straight to B minor from A. Which do you like most?

Figure 3 is intended to be played over figure 2, using a fizzy distortion sound and eight down strokes to the bar. Layering high two or three-note voicings over a guitar playing thick meaty chords is another part of Keuning's style and supplies some of the breadth and power you can hear on a typical Killers track.

Figure 4 is all about arpeggios, with some unusual high voicings and an open string mixed in for good measure.

The easiest way to explain it is to think about two separate groups of four notes. The first four notes are on the fifth, fourth and third strings. Then there's a second four-note arpeggio starting on the top string and ending on the D string, dragging the pick across the guitar in a series of upstrokes. If you play the pattern twice on the third chord you'll get a four-bar sequence.

FINGERSTYLE OR PICK?

You could try playing these arpeggios fingerstyle, which would be easier as the idea is to go quite fast. Tricky though it may be, the musical effect is probably better if you use your pick. We've chosen to describe these as the same chord but with a different bass note. That certainly works for the chord with the C# in the bass, but it would be just as possible to describe the third chord as some kind of G major chord; G major 13 (no third) being an option.

Figure 5 is another repeatable four-chord sequence inspired by the chorus of a Killers song. Both the G/B and the D/F# slash chords are first inversions. That is to say that the third of the chord is the bass note instead of the more usual root note. We saw the same thing in figure 2 with F#/A#.

The B in the bass of the G chord seems to push upwards a semitone to arrive on the root note of the C chord. The F sharp in the bass of the D chord, however, jumps to the B bass note at the beginning of the sequence when repeating.

This shows that you can choose slash chords both for their harmonic function and because they sound good in context. Bear them in mind if you are making up your own chord sequences… G

Guitar MAGAZINE MARKETPLACE

To advertise, contact **advertise@guitar.com**

Beginner to Boutique
One to One Service
Sensibly Priced
High Quality Used Guitars
Honesty and Integrity

Austin Guitars

Based in Kirkby, Liverpool, is a family run business dedicated to the provision of top quality new and used guitars.

Check out our latest arrivals at:
www.austinguitars.co.uk

Or email:
sales@austinguitars.co.uk

Keep up to date, follow us on Twitter:
@austinguitarsuk

Fast delivery nationwide

Showroom available by appointment

If you are looking to **buy, sell or trade** get in touch
0151 374 2459
07730 409 841

ALLPARTS (UK)

The UK's premier guitar, bass and amp parts supplier

Quality parts
for quality players

...bridges, necks, bodies, electronics, frets, inlay dots, pickups, knobs, switches, pickguards, tools scratchplates, strings, screws, nuts, saddles, tailpieces ...and much more!!!

Buy online at:
www.allparts.uk.com

Or call us on:
0800 849 8224 / 01494 410050

ABM, Bartolini, Bigsby, CRL, CTS, Danelectro, Earvana, Fender, Gotoh, Graphtech, Grover, Hipshot, Hofner, Dunlop, Oak Grigsby, Omega, Q-Parts, Razor, Schaller, Sperzel, Sprague, Switchcraft, Tremol-No, Tritan, Vibramate and Wilkinson.

ADVERTISE HERE!
advertise@guitar.com

Rob Williams
Custom Guitars

Professional guitar building
Repairs & Restorations

30 years of experience
at your service.

Newtown, Powys
Mid Wales
Tel; 01686 689120

www.robwilliamsguitars.co.uk
www.facebook.com/robwilliamsguitars

TALKBOX

TIM WHEELER

INTERVIEW JOSH GARDNER

The Ash frontman and guitarist talks Flying Vs, bleeding his way through gigs and being a very mediocre slide guitar player…

The moment it all started…
"I must have been 10 or 11 when I was really getting into Iron Maiden, Guns N' Roses, Bon Jovi and all that kind of stuff – it was the late 80s! Me and Mark [Hamilton, bass], we became friends when we were about that age, and we decided to both get guitars for Christmas. So yeah, we've really got Santa to blame for this whole thing! It was a Gibson Explorer copy, and I think it was made by a company called Artist.

I couldn't live without my…
"It's the guitar that I pretty much record everything with, my 1960s Les Paul Custom Black Beauty, with three PAFs. It's become my main workhorse guitar – it's too posh to bring on tour, but when I'm in the studio it's my main one. I don't know what I'd do if something disastrous happened to it… actually, I'd probably just go and buy a Custom Shop reissue! I've already got a nice Goldtop '57 Reissue as a backup – I just love Les Pauls, and the sound of humbuckers."

The one that got away…
"I had a really nice 1976 Fender Mustang, blue with the racing stripe, but it got lost in a studio move in the 90s. I bought it in New Orleans on tour, and I used it in the *A Life Less Ordinary* video. I wish it was still around, but I've never bought another Mustang! In terms of purchases I wish I'd made, there was a late-50s ES-335 that was in Angel Music, and apparently, it had belonged to Peter Green, and some people were saying it was the guitar he had used to record *Albatross*. If it had been a couple of grand cheaper, I probably would have got it… now I sort of wish I'd spent that extra.

My signature guitar would be…
"A Flying V… it's a bit boring, but I'd probably just replicate my main live guitar, which is a 1981 or 82 Korina V. Although it's not that easy to get Korina wood any more, so that might be tricky. My touring guitar also has a 1957 zebra-coil PAF in the bridge position so I guess I would start with that… other than that, there's not much else I can improve!"

The first thing I play when I pick up a guitar…
"I normally hit an E chord – I think it was probably the first-ever chord I played. If I'm trying a guitar out then I'll maybe noodle around a bit above the 12th fret and see how the bridge pickup sounds. But I start off with that ringing E chord!"

My Spinal Tap moment…
"There have been a lot of mishaps over the years – fire alarms going off in the middle of gigs and having to clear the place out… I've fallen over on stage many times, but there was this one time where I slipped backwards and smashed the headstock of my guitar on my forehead, so I was bleeding into my eyes for the rest of the show!"

My guilty pleasure…
"The things that would be considered guilty pleasures I don't really feel guilty about, because we were always listening to ABBA alongside Nirvana, y'know? And we were quite open about that – we covered ABBA quite a few times over the years. But I do like some really good cheesy pop music."

I'm in the band…
"Thin Lizzy in the beginning. I'd love to be Scott Gorham, because I would just love to have been in a band with Brian Robertson and hear him play every night. And because they had such great dual-guitar parts, it would mean that the pressure isn't totally on you as well, so you can just have a bit of fun."

I wish I was there…
"Talking Heads, when they were filming *Stop Making Sense*. The way the set develops almost from nothing and just grows and grows – I think it's genius. And it's theatrical but it also really serves the music really well, and they really seem to be at the peak of the powers. I've seen the concert film of it, but to actually be there would have been something else."

The most important thing on my rider…
"Mainly just functional stuff and snacks. That said, we do go through phases – like, we'll go through the Negroni phase or a margarita phase – but sometimes we just try to step it up and think of the most obscure liqueur. It's becomes a bit of a quest!"

If I could just play one thing
"Complex fingerpicking stuff – I've never really dived into that. And also, George Harrison's slide playing – that beautiful vibrato he gets… I don't really know anyone else who sounds him with a slide, and it's a beautiful thing. I'd love to be able to play like that, but I rarely pick up the slide really, I'm very mediocre with it!"

***Teenage Wildlife: 25 Years Of Ash* is out on 14 February 2020 via BMG**

teisco.com @weareteisco

TEISCO

DELAY FUZZ BOOST

A UNIVERSE OF FEARLESS MUSIC EXPLORERS